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*The*  
HONORABLE PICNIC

by the way

J. H. R. J.

from

E. B. T.

Dec. 1, 30



*The*

\* HONORABLE PICNIC \*

BY THOMAS RAUCAT



*Translated by*

LEONARD CLINE

*Decorations by*

LORRAINE COMBS



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# ANTHROPOLOGY

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### Note

In Japanese *e* is pronounced like long *a*, and *u* like *oo*, except at the end of a word, when it is pronounced almost like the *a* in *final*. There are no diphthongs; successive vowels are sounded separately. Pronounce *ch* as in church; *g* and *s* are always hard; *h* is strongly aspirated.





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*The*  
HONORABLE PICNIC







*Prologue:* IN A HYDROPLANE

TOKIO, Saturday, June 10, 1922, three o'clock in the afternoon. After the torrential downpour of the night an ardent sun is blazing.

In the public park of Ueno the Universal Peace Exposition hums its merriest. A multicolored crowd throngs about strange edifices which combine all styles of architecture and house the most diverse wares. But for the public the chief attraction is to be found on the pond of Ueno. Last summer this was still a tranquil marsh covered with pale pink lotuses. On an island stood a little hushed temple. Today the pond is cut in two by a great

concrete bridge, the Bridge of Peace. Jets of water spurt from the lake and at night the lanterns shine into its depths. All day long two noisy machines go spluttering back and forth across it while the crowd stares in amazement; these are the hydro-planes.

Thirty passengers can be accommodated in each, sitting in a spacious car supported on floats. On each side are canvas wings, small enough so that there is no danger of flying away. The propeller whirls at terrific speed and makes a tremendous roar, and the machine moves forward—but not fast enough to overtake the black swans on the water: the motor is six horse-power and no more.

Tickets cost ten sen.\* For that modest price one hears astounded the terrific back-firing which precludes the departure; then before the eyes of all one makes a tour of the pond, and one disembarks at last, laughing, one's ears still deafened and utterly convinced that one has gone aloft in an airplane. For most of the visitors this is the most beautiful memory of the Exposition.

Two girls were following the path along the

\* The Japanese monetary unit is the yen, at this period worth about one dollar. The yen is equal to 100 sen, which thus correspond to one cent each.



lake, walking in the direction of the hydroplane wharf. They were dressed in gay colors and appeared to be no older than eighteen. If the one was vivacious the other was remarkably pretty. Judging by their elegant coquettishness they were not country girls but rather residents of Tokio. Viewed from behind, parasols swaying above their bodies, one of them resembled a nasturtium and the other a geranium.

Ten steps behind followed a European whose eye never left them. He was a man no longer young, but refined and well-groomed. He was tall and robust, and his clean-shaven face had the long delicate nose of a sensualist. He had been following the girls for some time and was seeking some opportunity to come up with them.

Farther back in the crowd a little man of Asiatic hue was trying to make his way through the throng of people and overtake the foreigner. He was correctly dressed in a European suit and his watch-chain was of gold. He was a well-to-do manufacturer of Tokio; he had recognized the European in passing as a man with whom he had had some business a few months previous, and he desired to wish him good-day.

When the girls arrived at the hydroplane kiosk, the crowd happened to have thinned. They got tickets at once and went laughing to find seats in the car. The foreigner was close behind and succeeded in finding room on the bench beside the prettier of the girls. He was just about to speak to her when he felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned. It was his Japanese friend, who had caught up with him and managed to squeeze into a seat behind.

Most deferentially the Japanese saluted the foreigner. The foreigner replied in fairly understandable Japanese. He was exasperated at the prospect of a long conversation and said briefly that he was very busy on an important mission which had sent him to Tokio; his sojourn would not soon be over.

The motor started and its noise interrupted their conversation. The foreigner turned back then to his neighbor. Being a man of some experience, he knew that the girls of Tokio seldom refuse the invitation of an outing. After some gallant preliminaries he proposed to take her to the country for luncheon some day soon, and he suggested various places where they might go.

The hydroplane slid away on its circuit of the pond. The motor crepitated in front of them, and although they did not go fast there was a considerable breeze. As loud as he could the foreigner talked, and the girl kept her eyes stubbornly on the tip of her parasol and gave no sign of listening. But when he mentioned the name of Enoshima, which is a famous resort for excursionists in the environs of Tokio, she finally lifted her face with a tiny smile. Then they discussed the matter.

If the girls of Tokio are very naïve, they are likewise very timid. The foreigner had to make many concessions to her desires. She accepted with pleasure his invitation to visit Enoshima and he named the second day following; the next day, Sunday, it would be too crowded. As she was reluctant to travel with him in the train he agreed finally that she should follow on the next one, bringing with her a friend if she pleased. It was arranged that they would meet there at a hotel.

The foreigner had never been to Enoshima and was not familiar with the hotels, so he turned cynically to his Japanese friend and asked him to rec-

commend one. And the other shouted back "The Hotel Umematsuya." \*

That was enough; the foreigner had the railroad time-table with him. He would take a train at 9:45 and his neighbor would take the 10:20. Indeed that arrangement was to be preferred. Arriving first, he would be able more easily to arrange their stay at the hotel, which was the only thing that interested him.

In order that the girl should not forget and should consider herself obligated, the foreigner provided for her expenses in advance by giving her a ten-yen bill on which he had marked the train time and the name of the hotel.

She slipped the bill into her girdle without looking at it; then, dropping her head with embarrassment, she thanked him. And at once she began an animated chatter with her companion.

The hydroplane completed its tour of the pond. The foreigner regretted neither the ten sen for his ticket, nor his ten yen, nor even his encounter with the gentleman who so opportunely had come to his aid with the name of a hotel.

\* The House of the Pine and the Plum Tree (tokens of good luck).

The boat landed and everybody got up to leave. At this juncture the Japanese flung himself upon the foreigner and shook both of his hands with the most anxious display of affability. Half of the previous conversation he had managed to overhear.

"Alas!" he ejaculated. "Your lordship does not yet know Enoshima, one of the wonders of Japan! And instead of addressing yourself to your most humble friend, who would consider it an honor to escort you there, you have given yourself over to those two working girls!

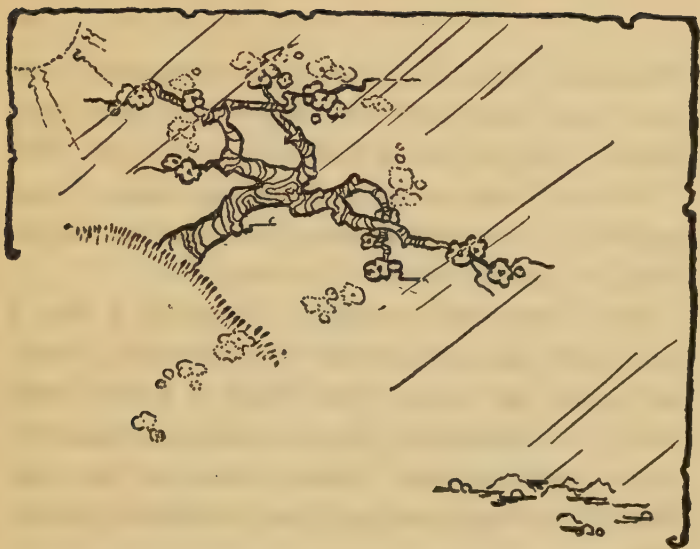
"Your egregious reticence toward me has been almost an affront! But it shall be remedied. None other than myself shall show you Enoshima! And since the day after tomorrow is convenient for you, I shall be waiting at the station for the 9:45 train, accompanied by some friends whom I shall gather in your honor. And I myself shall be your respectful host at the Hotel Umematsuya!"

Hastily the Japanese clambered out of the car and sought through all the crowds nearby for the two girls, to tell them not to put themselves to any trouble on Monday. But he sought them in vain. They were the first to hurry away, very excited and very joyous.



The foreigner, among the last to disembark, idly directed his steps toward the gate of the Exposition. He appeared to be somewhat vexed but, with the tenacity of the true gallant, he did not renounce for a minute his resolution to take in his arms on Monday this girl whom he hoped to know better.





## I. YOUNG GIRL

*Sun and wind, rain and mud,  
The cherry blossom shaking  
down  
Its petals of white . . .*

HEAVENS! Already five o'clock! How quickly time passes! I'll never have time to get dressed this morning before the ten o'clock train goes! And yet I must not disappoint the gentleman who invited me, especially the two honorable-friends that I have the pleasure of taking with me. One of them is

Otoku-San,\* my dear friend, who happened to be with me at the Exposition when the miracle took place; I could do no less than ask her to come. And I had the happiness too of inviting one of our neighbors, a married woman. The fresh air will be good for her and for her little boy.

First I must sew the lining of my obi; † then I must comb and coil my hair very carefully, kneeling before the mirror. And there is always some hitch. It is so hard to place all the pins elegantly! And at the same time I must whiten my face and throat with beauty-cream; that is absolutely necessary.

It will not take so very long to dress. Of course you must knot the obi just so, prettily, on your back, turning to look over your shoulder into the mirror. But I will have to study myself patiently a long time in the glass. However successful your toilet may seem, the least little touch that you overlook is enough to make you ridiculous. And there are so many details! I am far from being ready, still.

How long this obi is to sew! But what a magnificent day it is! A little while ago when I got up

\* Miss Honorable-Kindness.

† A long wide sash, by far the most precious part of feminine apparel.

the moon, white as silk, was floating in a pale sky. I was so excited: there will be sunshine for our outing! And yet we are still in the season which they call the Rain-of-Plums!

Think of going to Enoshima! They say it is wonderful. It's an island quite close to the coast. There must be twisted pines there and rocks of all colors . . . Maybe I'll never have another chance to take such an outing. It takes money, unfortunately.

My honorable-father is an agent in the custom-house at Fusan in Korea, and although he wears a uniform all braid and brass buttons, he doesn't make enough to send me much money. Of course since the death of my honorable-mother he has remarried twice and now he has seven other children to bring up. I haven't even met all of them. Just the same my honorable-father is very considerate of me and every time he writes I find a small check in the letter, without any explanation. My honorable-brother is not very rich either. He is married and lives in Tokio. I don't see him often, but sometimes he gives me a little present of money—although according to family custom it is I who should work for him.

I could live at the home of my honorable-grand-

mother, who is rich. She manages one of the restaurants in the town of Koze. I could live there without doing any work. But I would rather live here in Tokio where I feel much happier. To come from Tokio is such a distinction! When I go to Koze for a visit everybody respects me as a person from the capital.

So I live here with my uncle and he gives me room and board; in return I am asked to help the maid now and then with the cleaning and cooking. That takes only a little while and is not hard work. Beyond that my aunt doesn't bother herself much with me. And I am on very friendly terms with my cousins, their two honorable-children: a young gentleman of twenty who clerks in the honorable-shop, and a young lady of thirteen who goes to school every day.\*

My honorable-uncle is a watchmaker; he lives in the Ryogoku quarter, which is quite pleasant. It's a little too popular, but it is very gay. We are in the neighborhood of the honorable-wrestlers' houses, and quite close to the Sumida River. When there is a wrestling match or a fête on the river many peo-

\* The Japanese calculate age in a special manner. Subtract one year to find the age as we calculate it.

ple come to the quarter and it is very diverting. . . .

Oh, Mister Cricket! \* Why don't you sing in your cage? You are tired, you are hungry. I'll go down to the kitchen and bring you back a bit of peach. . . .

This obi takes long to sew but little by little it is becoming so pretty! One's dress is exacting but thrilling. It is the only important thing in life. You are never done thinking about it; and yet every time I only think about the next one, not at all about the ones to come later.

One ought to wear different clothes every day, but I am not rich enough for that. So whenever I go out I change something about in order never to look quite the same. But in any case the New Year costume must be entirely new, and it includes not only robe, but also sash and cords, scarf, little bag, parasol or umbrella, stockings, geta,† and hair-pins. Also underclothes. You only catch a glimpse of these now and then when the kimono flutters apart as you walk. But it is just such small details

\* During the summer it is customary in Japan to hang crickets in cages in the house.

† Small boards raised from the ground which serve as sandals.



that you must be most careful about. It is these that other people look at and that give you a smart appearance.

Girls should have new costumes for the February festivals, and others in April for the cherry-tree fête. The patterns of the obi then are cherry blossoms. Next is the festival of the little boys, and after that the festival of the soybean; and then comes summer. Now the styles become lighter and more flashy. In autumn the sash once more reflects the motives of the season. No more butterflies, but red maple leaves and then chrysanthemums. This is the Feast of the New Rice. And at last comes the snow costume.

Next year none of these costumes will do, because you grow older. The colors must be less lively and the designs smaller. And at that you never like to wear a costume from the year before. Anything that has been shown a single time is worn out by that fact alone.

Among all my obi there is just one lovely piece left. It is an obi with a chrysanthemum pattern that my honorable-grandmother gave me last fall; she made me pick it out when I was visiting her at Kozu. I have had no chance to wear it here in Tokio

because the season was over; the Chrysanthemum Show had ended. That enables me to wear it still this year. It cost the high price of 42 yen and it is therefore very beautiful, but I shall feel a little ashamed of deceiving the passersby when I wear it as if it were new.

It happens very rarely that I have the chance to dress up and go on an outing, I am so poor. And then too I would not dare. The last fine excursion that I remember was at the cherry-tree festival. My honorable-uncle took me. It was splendid. He closed the shop and he even got a beautiful geisha-young-lady,\* who came with us carrying her mandolin wrapped in a great piece of white silk. There was my honorable-cousin and another honorable-young-man, a friend of his. Then my honorable-aunt who carried some sake,† kept warm in a thermos bottle, in a bandoleer. My other honorable-cousin, the little girl, carried some cakes of rice paste and dried potato. You can buy very good cakes at the park but they are more expensive. As for me, I carried the mat of straw on which we would kneel at the picnic; the ground is so dirty.

\* A kind of actress.

† A light wine made of rice and served warm.

We took the train and got off beside the Tokio city water-supply canal.

Through all its length the lane of cherry trees was an inspiring picture. Great trees all rosy and white as far as you could see, more brilliant than you would ever imagine. They fairly burn your eyes. And beneath them people, drinking and singing joyously. In cherry-blossom time everybody ought to be happy; there is nothing to prevent it. My cousin had dressed himself up in a masquerade costume of red paper covered with stars and white moons. He was very funny. He had brought for me a green paper hat like the ones American women wear. But I did not wish to put it on. Even to have a good time, I do not care to make people laugh at me.

We had a hard time finding an empty place beneath a cherry tree, there were so many people. Finally I spread the mat on the grass and we knelt in a circle upon it. The geisha-young-lady was placed in the centre and all day she played and sang for us songs suited to the occasion, modern tunes as well as the old traditional ones, and especially the Dance from the time of the Gen-roku, a melody that I love, turn by turn so gay and so melancholy.

The gentlemen drank all the sake; it was necessary indeed to buy more three times. The geisha-young-lady drank a little and the honorable-friend of my cousin tried to make me sip from his cup. But ladies don't drink sake; it isn't done. And so we others ate many rice-cakes and drank lemonade.

There was a little breeze and the petals came fluttering down from the trees and fell on our shoulders. People stopped and knelt beside us in order to listen to the music, and a young gentleman who was disguised and who had been drinking actually tried to make me get up and dance with him, as the Americans do. But to dance with a man is outrageous. One may dance only by oneself. So I just laughed at him and stayed decorously on my knees.

What a lovely fête! The honorable-peddlers with their great colored baskets crying their wares. Everywhere the strumming of mandolins. Little children scampering merrily about and brandishing their red toys. And above, the cherry blossoms shining in the sun.

Toward five o'clock in the afternoon the geisha-young-lady took leave of us, having another engagement elsewhere. It began to get a bit cool and

we too turned home. The train was crowded with people, tired out but happy, and some of them a little drunk. All were carrying branches of cherry blossoms.

The party ended as magnificently as it began. My uncle wanted to have it perfect to the last minute. At the railroad station he called a taxicab to take my aunt, my little cousin and myself home. A taxicab: and without a thought for the expense!

For his part he took the young honorable-gentlemen to spend the evening in the finest joroya in the segregated district in Susaki, a suburb of Tokio. He chose this particular one because between the houses runs a famous lane of cherry trees. He himself only ate some rice and drank some more sake; but he helped the young gentlemen select the prettiest girls: and he stayed until they were ready to come home. Next day my cousin told me that from the chamber he occupied he could see the row of cherry trees gleaming under the moon. It seems to have been quite lovely.

Two days later, indeed, I took three of my friends, Kimi-San, Shizue-San and O-moto-San; \*

\* Miss Prince, Miss Peaceful-River, Miss Honorable-Fountainhead: feminine prænomena.

and we went to see the place by night. Truly I would never have believed there existed in Tokio cherry trees so big and so old! And we looked at the houses too. In the old days the pretty girls themselves sauntered and smiled in front of the houses; now, alas! you can admire them only in their photographs. But how large their portraits are and how expensive! And how well dressed they are! We were a little envious of their lot.

The next festival for which I must find a costume is that of All Souls. At Tokio it comes in the middle of July, which is a month away. And that night all the honorable-Spirits of the dead come to visit the earth and see how the living are behaving themselves. They themselves have become gods, because they are dead.\*

Every year the city of Tokio puts on a great display of fireworks along the river for the honorable-Spirits of its former citizens; that serves to bring them together and do them honor. It is a magnificent fête. This year, according to the papers, on the holy night the Government will send military aviators to fly above the city and try

\* The popular religion of Japan is a combination of Buddhist and Shinto beliefs.



to break the altitude records. Each of them will have as passengers a venerable-bonze who will keep setting off sky-rockets. I am sure none of the honorable-Spirits will miss this spectacle—they will all come to admire it.

The living also are permitted to watch the fireworks and a great throng will gather. Everybody laughs and sings; and gentlemen who can afford it drink sake in illuminated gondolas on the river, in the midst of dainty geisha-girls who play their mandolins. The honorable-Spirits of the dead are proud when they see how merry everyone is in their honor.

When the fête is over you go back home, where earlier in the evening you have lighted up the little Temple of the Ancestors and made it ready with offerings of rice paste and fruits. The Spirits of the honorable-dead-ancestors come in the night to visit your house. If the shrine is quite new and the offerings are nice, and if you are very gay, they are sure that you have been thinking of them and by way of thanks they give you happiness the whole year long.

For a woman, the only courtesy you can do toward the honorable-Spirits is to wear clothes just as

beautiful as the clothes which they themselves wear and which nobody can see. Moreover the Night of All Souls introduces the summer styles.

I myself am very much embarrassed this year; for I have not yet been able to get together a suitable costume. I bought a kimono in blue and white squares, for the fashion has reverted from stripes to checks. My cousin is happy; our proverb says that when checks come in style business must improve. But unfortunately I have no obi. I must have a summer obi, unlined and of Hakata silk braid. I want it mauve with a pattern of flowers in open-work. I can't do without it and yet it will cost so much! In order to buy it I am going to have to work every day at dressmaking during the month that remains. And I will ask them not to pay me until the end, so that I will not spend all the money as I get it. I will have to work very hard, but it is necessary. Otherwise, how could I go to the beautiful festival? And I shall be happy no matter how tired I am, for always I shall be thinking about my new obi.

This wonderful excursion today is something I never dreamed would happen. What a tangle of coincidences! How did I happen to be at the Uni-

versal Peace Exposition just at that time? It is a miracle. I had received a letter from my honorable-father which told me very formally of the birth of another baby, and by good fortune it was once again a boy. In the letter was a note of five yen, but it was not for me. My father asked me to take it for him to the temple of His Majesty the Emperor Meiji \* as a thank-offering for having given him a son. That was the proper thing to do.

The Meiji Temple is at Aoyama, at the other end of Tokio, at least an hour and a half by tramway from the honorable-shop. On a fine day it's a splendid trip.

Saturday morning I put on a pretty costume and about nine o'clock Otoku-San and I left for Aoyama. We were very gay and proud to make so glorious a pilgrimage. The park in which the Meiji Temple stands is very lovely: the long road zig-zagging through it bordered by lofty trees; the lanterns of white stone, the great torii or consecrated porticos of wood, all new . . .

The temple itself is even more impressive and more new. A marvel of carven wood. After rinsing hands and mouth at the fountain in the court, you

\* Meiji was the founder of the modern Japanese Empire.

go up the steps and pause before the barrier at the entrance to repeat your acts of adoration and thanksgiving. There is a big pile of money on the floor, and on each side an honorable-priest, in white robe and black headdress, kneeling in prayer. You toss on the pile your offering for the maintenance of the temple and then piously you withdraw.

When we arrived the temple was crowded. There is always a multitude of the faithful there. Moreover many visitors came from the provinces for the Exposition, and they must begin their sojourn in Tokio by a pilgrimage of adoration for the Spirit of His Majesty the Emperor Meiji. We looked at the honorable-devotees: many pretty women, some of them better dressed than we. No one gave much money. There was not a single note of more than 50 sen on the pile. So we began to feel ashamed of ourselves. We would not dare to offer the five-yen note. Comparatively with this amount we were not well-dressed enough. We would have been a laughing-stock before all the visitors and above all before the Spirit of His Majesty the Emperor Meiji. What could we do? We were tortured with uncertainty.

Fortunately I had brought along my savings,

which consisted chiefly of a 50-sen note. I chose a moment when not so many people were near and threw the note on the pile. Then we hurried away as fast as we could and without glancing back. At that we had offered an extraordinary sum for such modest young girls as we were. We trembled for fear all the other women had stared at us with curiosity.

When we were out of danger, alone together and quite out of sight, we stopped and laughed until we cried.

What a comical story this was and how well we had gotten out of our predicament! His Majesty the Emperor Meiji was satisfied with our intelligent piety. He knows that I will bring him the five yen some day when I am a married woman and have an obi of brocade. It is too bad that His Majesty has to wait, but his temple is new and has no need of repairs.

And so we found ourselves with five yen to spend immediately. What would be the best way? Beside us in the tram the women were all talking about the Exposition, to which they were on their way. It was a fine idea for us to go there once more.

There would be a crowd of people, the day was fair, and our costumes were pretty.

We had a delightful time; we had many little frosted cakes to eat, and then during our flight in the airplane we met an extraordinary foreign gentleman. I have much for which to thank the Spirit of His Majesty the Emperor Meiji. If he had not given my honorable-father a little son, I would not have the pleasure of going to Enoshima to-day.

Unfortunately I had not expected this outing. Comparatively I ought to wear a costume today twice as pretty as the one I wore for the Exposition. But when I dressed to go to the Meiji Temple, I had put on the only costume that would do. And I could not wear that again since the foreign gentleman had seen it. What was I to do?

On Saturday, after leaving the Exposition, we were desperately worried over this grave matter. Only two days to solve it! I meditated very profoundly.

Today I will wear the kimono that I was saving for All Souls Night; it is rather light and the colors are somewhat too lively for the season. In the



country that will not matter; a little boldness in clothes doesn't displease me, and this will make me look younger. At eighteen you begin to think of that.

I can keep the same parasol I wore day before yesterday; the foreign gentleman did not see it open. But the problem of my obi made me think hard; I was wearing my only silk obi suitable for the season, my other one is of muslin de laine, a common fabric. There was one recourse: to wear the Saturday obi turned inside-out. As the lining is as fine as the face, many women do that from time to time, and it gives them a completely different obi. But people who know where to look can find it out; and anyway, even if the foreign gentleman were unable to recognize it, I would feel embarrassed wearing the same obi.

Then I remembered that some time ago I made an obi for one of my honorable-customers. It is all white, and very elegant. It would suit me perfectly. So yesterday I went and asked her very politely to let me borrow it and she did me that favor. Unfortunately the honorable-lady is married and the lining is much too rich for a young girl my age. So I decided to use the lining of my Exposition



obi instead, and that is the work I have been doing for three hours and a half this morning. It is long. It was necessary to take out the stitches of the two obi, very carefully, and then sew the new one together. Tomorrow I will have to do the whole thing again, reversely.

For all that, you can't improvise a new costume so easily for an excursion of such importance. I had to make a multitude of little purchases, and all yesterday afternoon I went shopping with Otokusan.

I bought a Spanish hair-comb, very high, of celluloid inlaid with lead. I had some new cords, violet and rose, put in my geta. I bought another bottle of beauty-cream. I'll have to put on two coats of it. Luckily you don't have to change the color of your cheeks every season, as your costume. All the year long your face must be absolutely white. We poor Japanese girls have such dull complexions that we have to use a lot of powder and beauty-cream.

And I bought some false-sleeves of rose-colored silk for my chemise, the edge of which will just be glimpsed in the opening of the kimono sleeves. I selected an expensive pattern in which three gulls

were faintly printed. Of course nobody would see these, but they were for my own satisfaction, since I was going to visit an island.

And finally I got myself a black Chinese fan like those the geisha-young-ladies are carrying this year. My honorable-cousin told me the other day about this pretty new fashion, and by good luck I stumbled upon these very fans in a stall on the Boulevard Ginza.

Otoku-San watched me with beating heart buy so many pretty things. She did not have much money. To console her I bought her a sash of pale blue silk stuffed with cotton, which will be sweet today upon her obi.

Well on toward evening I happened to count the money left in my little bag and I found that I had spent not only the rest of the money for His Majesty the Emperor Meiji but indeed almost all of the banknote of ten yen which the foreign gentleman had given me. Not more than two yen remained, and I burst out laughing.

I had no money now to go on the excursion! What a comical mishap! Just a moment ago I had money for my railroad fare but no costume that

was presentable. Now I had a costume but no money. How amusing! All we could do was stand there and laugh and laugh.

Fortunately I could ask Otoku-San to lend me a few yen. She is a fine girl and she loves me dearly, and she is as eager as I to go to Enoshima. Sometimes her honorable-family is generous to her. She is coming presently and I know that I need not worry, she will bring me money. The only danger now is that I shall not be ready in time.

Time and again I've asked myself why the foreign gentleman invited me on the excursion. Need I look so very far for a reason? I don't know; this is the first time I have ever spoken to a foreign gentleman. He seemed to me very rich, and quite excited, and extremely polite.

Will he want to make love to me? It is not likely. I don't look like the beautiful women of his country. They have such white skin that they are obliged to rouge it. Of all I have heard about the Occident, that strikes me as most amazing. . . . And then too in Japan I am of very humble station. A personage such as he would never consider me worthy of him.

Really I am not eager to have him make love to me. But just once, perhaps, it would be curious, and so soon over. Ah well, I mustn't think of it; there will be time to worry about that when necessity compels me. . . .

I am beginning to understand them, these gentlemen, and their way with girls. Things are not as they were a year ago. In spite of myself they always used to win me! But now I have learned how to elude them, and often I can make my own decision. . . .

I don't like this thing. The last time, when was that? Oh yes, I remember. It was with the honorable-friend who went with us to the cherry-tree picnic and who tried to make me taste the sake. This happened several days later. I have not seen him since; I wonder what has become of him. He promised me a little ring. But he has no money, and as for me I would never have dared to wear it. Moreover it is when the promise is made that a girl is happiest, and later the gift itself adds nothing. It is never as pretty as you imagined.

A week after the cherry-tree festival our friend came to the honorable-shop to pay his thanks to my uncle. I happened to be there and he suggested that

we go to Asakusa \* to the movie. My costume was a darling and I had no reason to refuse.

I like the movies very much. I like the theatre too, but I prefer the movies because they are an imitation of the foreigners. The tickets cost more and it is more distinguished.

The show was very beautiful and the narrator † had such a dramatic voice! First we heard one episode of an American serial film. When this began the blonde young lady was hanging by her hair from an airplane and the wicked gentleman who was the passenger was trying to stab out her eyes with his fountain pen. All the women were shuddering. But just in time along came her fiancé, a newspaper reporter, to the rescue, sitting horse-back on his tame eagle, which bit off the wings of the airplane. Then followed a dizzy fall. . . . I could have learned the following week how they escaped.

That is all I remember and it is thanks to the explanation of the honorable-narrator. All these people hurried around in such a frantic flurry that

\* The theatrical and amusement district in Tokio.

† In Japan moving pictures are explained as they proceed by a narrator.

my eyes blurred. All through the picture I was trying in vain to understand and completely bewildered.

Next there was a perfectly grand Japanese film that thrilled me even more than usual. First they introduced me to the honorable-grandfather, an honest carpenter, and then his numerous honorable-family. Finally I saw his wicked son and, in order that I might recognize him more easily, he was the only one dressed in the European manner. He broke into the post-office, he stole money and postage stamps, and then he fled to a foreign land to dispose of them. That brought to pass a terrible story. The honorable-grandfather paid back the post-office and then he cut open his stomach before my eyes. And the honorable-father, too, before my eyes, died of a broken heart. The young girl, Miss Kurishima Sumiko,\* was left all alone with many honorable-little-brothers who kept on crying so sadly. She worked her hands to the bone in order to support them. Finally one day His Highness, a Prince of the Blood came to visit the school. It was her duty to see that her little brothers that day wore European clothes, like all the other pupils.

\* A Japanese movie star.



Otherwise the memory of the honorable-grandfather would have been covered with shame. Miss Sumiko had no money to buy suits for them, and in order to get them, instead of giving her hand in marriage to a young gentleman who loved her, she went into the city and hired herself to an honorable-brothel for the space of ten years. It was as sublime as at the theatre.

All the ladies in the audience were sniffing and trying not to weep. We were overwhelmed with pity and admiration.

Then there were many other sad things in the picture. Lovers who wanted to get married were never able to do so, and people who did not want to marry each other were always obliged to do so. So they almost always preferred to kill themselves. The story did not end until finally all the gentlemen and ladies I had met had died of chagrin, or had been drowned, or had been locked up in prison or in the honorable-brothel. It lasted three hours. I was moved to the bottom of my heart, yet I was in a position not very conducive to listening, I remember . . . Here is the reason.

At the movie, downstairs there are benches; these are the cheap seats. On the first balcony, in front,



are the boxes. That is the best place and I would have enjoyed sitting there. One can kneel at one's ease. But since these are arranged in the Japanese manner the gentlemen and the ladies are separated. The gentlemen are in the boxes on the left, the side of honor, and the ladies in the boxes on the right.

It would not have been nice of me to leave my friend. He had invited me to keep him company and when he asked me to stay with him I could hardly refuse. So we sat side by side, behind the boxes, on a little bench. But I cannot sit very long in the European manner. That is a posture in which your legs hang down in the empty air. Very soon I get tired. So in a little while I tried to get on my knees on the bench, but it was too narrow. Then my friend suggested that, as he was beside me, I could kneel half on the bench and half on his lap. This posture was perhaps not quite correct, but we were high up and in the shadow.

Hardly had I closed my eyes, the better to hear, when I seemed to feel that the mind of my honorable-friend was not entirely on the movie. I waited a little while. My friend did not let on, but it was quite true. What a comical incident! As if I

would ever have imagined anything like that!

Presently I turned my head a little and looked at him smiling faintly with one eye and a corner of my mouth. That was by way of indicating that I was not angry and he understood it at once.

For half an hour longer however we remained there in that queer position, without budging either one of us and as if nothing had happened. We must needs wait for the end of the show. If we left before it was over the young lady attendants might ask us why, and laugh at us; we would have looked silly. And after all, I would not have missed the end of such a film for anything in the world. Perhaps my friend was a little impatient, but he could not displease me because I was his guest and he was compelled in courtesy to act as if there was nothing on his mind.

Naturally I did not discuss at home what happened the rest of the evening, and my honorable-cousin politely made no allusion to it, although I am sure he knew.

As for me, in spite of my surprise, and although I did not feel in my heart any very great desire, could I have refused that favor which was asked of me in a manner so discreet, so polite and so ex-

pressive? In my opinion that would have been neither graceful nor even decent.

That is how I explained it to Otoku-San the next day and then we laughed until we almost suffocated. For a whole week afterwards, whenever we met, we could not so much as look at each other without laughing like mad.

That sequel to the show is an amusing memory, but I feel that I shall forget it more easily than any little detail of the beautiful movie, which still stirs my very soul when I think of it. Life is all a miracle, composed of entertaining incidents. There are too many of them, you can't keep track of them all, and all too soon they are forgotten. In the ordinary routine of existence nothing ever happens that really grips your heart; if you want to be profoundly moved you must go to the movie. I don't go often and every time I do go I am quite exhausted. And, when I remember how my breath comes so hot and fast in such pathetic passages, I know that if I myself should ever be involved in an affair so tremendous and so vital, poor me! my emotion would surely kill me. . . .

But what a silly, idle fancy that is! Right now only one thing is of grave importance. Mister

Cricket won't sing and he won't eat anything. Of course! He doesn't like peaches! How stupid I was not to think of that before!

There, there, darling Cri-Cri! So much the worse for my honorable-friends! So much the worse if I am not ready and lose the chance to wear this love of a costume! I shall go down at once to the fruit shop and, if I ask the fruiterer very sweetly, it will be strange if he does not give me a great green slice of cucumber for you!





## II. SEVERAL BOURGEOIS

*Dwarf trees misshapen  
By the zealous gardener's hand  
Turn to works of art. . . .*

AFTER stopping in at the factory, I arrived at the railroad station at ten minutes to nine. That afforded me almost an hour before the departure of the 9:45 train; not a minute too much.

When one has invited honorable-friends thus for an outing, it is proper to arrange everything before their arrival and to greet them at the gate of the station smiling and nonchalant, as if there had been no preparations. They certainly will not be late.

I went to the ticket-window where I bought five

second-class return tickets for Fujisawa, where one gets off to go to Enoshima. I did not get first-class tickets because there are no first-class coaches in ordinary trains. First-class coaches are reserved for members of the August Household of His Majesty the Emperor. They attach one to a train when a member of the August Household goes abroad. In certain express trains *de luxe*, however, there are first-class coaches, a concession to the bourgeoisie: a matter that has always been shocking to me.

Next, I purchased a few little trifles to divert and amuse my honorable-guests during the trip. For each a paper fan, a box of matches, a package of citron caramels, a package of cigarettes, a red paper carnation, one of the morning newspapers, and a sack of "Jin-Tan" pills which safeguard one from all sorts of sickness. They are a perfect first-aid.

All these I wrapped in a *furoshiki*\* of gray crêpe and then I mounted guard at the entrance to the waiting-room.

I did not have long to wait. A few minutes later I saw young Mr. Takamori hurry in. I am a manufacturer of straw hats. Mr. Takamori is my de-

\* A sheet of stuff for wrapping parcels.

signer. At present I am treating him as if he were none other than my honorable-father and the reason is this: My business is interesting, for during the summer the straw is our national headgear. Unfortunately it is a seasonal hat, and in winter men wear according to their taste felt hats, high hats or wolf-skin caps. Now, there is no reason why they should not keep on wearing straw; and Mr. Takamori is experimenting for me with a straw hat weather-tight and warm. If such a hat could be produced there would be a fortune in it. Towards my designer therefore I have, at present and with good reason, the warmest of esteem.

Mr. Takamori bowed profoundly before me, thanking me humbly for the honorable-invitation. Then we fell to chatting as we awaited the other gentlemen.

Soon we perceived the eminent Professor Kamei, who came hurrying over to us on his clacking geta. He was panting heavily, apprehensive that he would be late. We reassured him. There still remained twenty-five minutes before train-time.

Professor Kamei has lived a long time in foreign countries and knows them thoroughly. In recognition of this His Majesty the Emperor named him



professor of historic Celtic and Saxon law at the University of Tokio. It is a most abstruse specialty, although Professor Kamei does not receive a large stipend. To be sure his duties are not very exacting: perhaps two lectures a year. That allows him to devote more time to the companionship of his respectful admirers.

Professor Kamei is very old, and he is as wise as he is hoary. He knows many things and he carries in his head all the serenity of the Chinese philosophy. I am always deeply impressed by his advice, although I seldom follow it. It would be fitting, on the death of Professor Kamei, for his humble-friends to erect in his memory a monument richer than the ordinary; men of his ilk are few and far between. I am already busying myself, discreetly, soliciting subscriptions.

Professor Kamei made us a deep and repeated obeisance. We responded in the same manner, taking care to place ourselves obliquely so as to be able to watch him while bending over and not stand up before he did. It is necessary that all recover themselves simultaneously. Otherwise the first to unbend commits an impropriety quite unpardonable.

Professor Kamei then voiced many courteous

expressions of solicitude for me, holding his hand elegantly before his mouth. As he was choking with breathlessness, I understood only a few of his words; but I replied, nevertheless. One must pronounce the customary phrases.

While he was speaking, we fanned him respectfully, one on each side, in order to refresh him. This lasted for some minutes.

Brisk and smiling we saw Mr. Yamaguchi, who likewise was among my honorable-guests, dismount from a taxicab. Mr. Yamaguchi is a very busy man and I thanked him deferentially for having condescended to grant me an entire day. He is a superiorly intelligent spirit and of extreme energy. He is interested in various commercial enterprises and stock transactions, and he writes for the newspapers. Furthermore Mr. Yamaguchi is a henchman of the Government. He lets it be understood, in fact, that from time to time he is called upon by our political police for information. He is proud of the important service he renders, naturally, but he is obliged to keep silent regarding it. Mr. Yamaguchi, although younger than I, is an influential man, and I am gratified to believe myself his friend, and endeavor always to ingratiate myself with him.

Now there remained only my friend the foreigner, who was the pretext for our outing, to wait for. I was a little uneasy lest I fail to see him when he arrived. No more than fifteen minutes before train-time! To while away the interval we exchanged regards, and to dissemble our increasing uneasiness we displayed a gaiety more and more lively.

With the bluntness of careless youth my designer asked if I had told the honorable-foreigner the right time. It was vulgar to let the object of our mutual anxiety to be seen so openly. The other gentlemen laughed in order to cover up this unfortunate slip, and I laughed also, even more embarrassed than they.

To change the subject, Mr. Yamaguchi told us amusingly how close we had come to being deprived of his unworthy presence. He lives at Nakashibuya, somewhat out in the suburbs, and he had called a taxicab to take him to the station. He had not remembered that it is almost quicker to go on foot. Every morning all the roads out of Tokio are completely clogged up by the ox-carts which take away into the country the night-soil of the city. He could see no way to get by. Happily at this

moment there came along an automobile funeral cortège before which everybody respectfully stood aside. He got into line as if he were one of the family. It was a lavish funeral; the motors were powerful and went fast. His taxi managed to follow them. And that is how he was able humbly to join us on time.

It was 9:35 and they began to let the passengers out on the platform. The foreigner was not there yet and I was profoundly upset.

Had it rained torrents, the day might nevertheless have been a success. Sunshine really is not necessary when one goes to the country. But the presence of the foreigner was as indispensable as the handle of a fan. Without him the entire affair would collapse.

I had invited him for important reasons. The first is that we are duty-bound to entertain royally foreigners who are our guests. It is in a way a patriotic duty, and there in the hydroplane at the Exposition the voice of my conscience summoned me to fulfill it.

In addition it is always pleasant to play host to an eminent foreigner; one is enabled to show him that we are no less Europeanized than he, that we

understand as well as he the customs and etiquette of his continent. The pleasure is enhanced when other friends witness the scene. To entertain a foreigner causes comment and lends an air of social distinction. It is also a tribute to my other friends that I called upon them to add by their illustrious presence to the brilliance of the occasion.

There was yet another reason. I had been greatly shocked, not only as a Japanese subject but also in the name of all the masculine sex, to see the distinguished foreigner plan an outing with two honorable-young-ladies. It is not seemly that a gentleman show himself thus in public with persons of the inferior sex. It is a sort of lapse. One goes abroad only with men, personages of the same class of society and rank. And then, why take women to the country? Japan is a civilized nation; at all summer resorts one can find witty geisha-girls to amuse one; or, if one is still young, one can pay pretty girls to provide an agreeable evening. Many resorts indeed are celebrated more for their honorable-geisha than for the beauty of the countryside. An outing is an opportunity to rest up for a moment from the women that one meets habitually and whose society, pleasant as it may be, finally

grows tedious. So one leaves these women at home or perhaps sends them on an outing by themselves. It is possible that in foreign countries no such organization as ours exists and that one is compelled to take along the women who will be the spirit of the party. But what an encumbrance! Europe is less civilized than we in this respect as in others. Why do they not come to study our social system in detail? Why do they not emulate us? The Occidentals are too proud of themselves.

I had selected my guests with circumspection. Professor Kamei knows Europe, Mr. Yamaguchi speaks French fluently; all this would be pleasant at once for the foreigner, Professor Kamei and Mr. Yamaguchi. I counted on asking Professor Kamei to engage in a little tilt with the foreigner over some question of English jurisprudence. We would listen to these remarkable wits clash, and Mr. Yamaguchi could do no less than write an article about it for one of the newspapers to which he contributes. In all courtesy he would write something likewise about my new hat, on the subject of which Mr. Takamori would have given him casually some laudatory information.

Having passed thus a perfect day, having given



my guests every possible pleasure and honor and having received the same favors from them in return, I would procure no less for my new invention a splendid free publicity. It would all be a marvelous success.

Unfortunately the foreigner was not there. People began to get on the train and we were compelled to follow, lest the best seats be all taken.

The foreigner would arrive probably just in time to miss the train. Perhaps indeed those girls from the Exposition were the cause of his extraordinary tardiness. The Occidentals are incomprehensible. In point of scientific intelligence they are rather remarkable, but in ordinary matters of life they act like children or madmen.

I had Mr. Yamaguchi write a few words in French on the blackboard which serves as a means of communication with friends who have lost their way. The attention of my honorable-guest would be called to these when he arrived at the station.

It was proper that each of us affect to think nothing of the foreigner's absence. All of us were dismayed, but it was necessary to act as if there had been any question about it. Etiquette demanded that.



We were off for the country to enjoy ourselves together in the sweet fresh air. Away with the worries of workaday life! No more serious conversation! It was for pleasure alone that we were taking the train. If there had been some calculation in the selection of my guests, there was to be no more thought of it. We must appear to have met each other by some most delightful happenstance.

I distributed among the party carnations of red paper which were to serve as a distinctive uniform on our merry jaunt to the country. And each of us put his flower in his buttonhole. Professor Kamei alone had come in the national kimono, and it was so low that one could not stick his flower in the same place as ours without putting it through the skin. Making a great show of hilarity we thrust his flower through the lining of his straw hat. Professor Kamei should be our color-bearer!

Then to show all the more how gay we felt, we pushed back our hats on the napes of our necks, at an almost vertical tilt; and so at last we turned toward the platform.

Passing last of all by the guard at the gate I left further instructions with him, so that the foreigner

could find the right train when he came. It is so easy to get lost.

We chose a coach that was almost empty and established ourselves in the centre. That is the most airy position and the farthest from the bustle at the doors. Our second-class coaches are comfortable, although it seems they are smaller than in other countries. In each coach there are only two long benches which face each other, backs to the windows: they run from one end of the long car to the other. The bench is big enough so that you can kneel on it comfortably, elbows on the window if you please to see the view.

It was very warm and so we had no reason for keeping on our clothes. On the train one may make oneself comfortable just as if one were at home; and the occidental suits are uncomfortable in summer—in winter too for that matter.

To set the example, I hurried to take off my shoes, which I put beneath me under the bench, then my hat and my jacket, which I put in the rack. I undid the rubber-band which fastened my necktie and I relieved myself of that instrument of torture which is the collar. I let my suspenders slide down and pulled off my trousers of white linen

which I folded carefully. And I slipped out of my silk shirt which buttons in front in the American style.

My friends had been glad to follow my example and we remained clothed in a shirt of open texture and short drawers. It was all very decent and we were able thus not to shock the foreign gentlemen and ladies who came in and looked at us from the end of the compartment. It indicated to them that they did not disturb us at all by doing so.

We sat down cross-legged, placing ourselves face to face, two on each bench. The sun could beat down, we would be cool in the train notwithstanding and quite at ease. I continued to look out of the window without letting on, to watch for the arrival of the foreigner.

The train left without my honorable-guest. So much the worse for him. But we pretended all of us to be delighted at the shrill of the whistle. That was polite. We congratulated each other as if we had never expected the foreigner. Having thus departed from Tokio as we desired, there remained nothing for us to do but have a good time together.

I opened my crêpe parcel; I took out and distributed to each person the little things I had

bought in order to make the trip more pleasant. The gentlemen thanked me as if I had just saved the lives of their fathers. According to custom there were for me neither caramels nor cigarettes, which enabled them to offer me some and enabled me to do them the courtesy of accepting from each. I was heaped beyond my capacity; I had three caramels in my mouth and three cigarettes in my right hand.

When the caramels had been swallowed, we examined together the things which each had brought for the excursion. I had come carrying a thermos-bottle which my wife had filled that morning with fresh cold milk. Milk is the most refreshing of beverages and the railroad trip might fatigue my guests.

My designer, Mr. Takamori, had brought a superb "Reflex" photographic apparatus of the best German manufacture, extra-illuminating lens, timed to a thousandth of a second. Not one of the interesting details of the trip, how fugitive soever, could escape him.

Mr. Yamaguchi showed us his magnificent binoculars, with truly extraordinary lenses, clearness and magnifying power, micrometric eye-piece, Mo-

rocco leather and all. The case alone was a marvel, and we congratulated him highly, after having peered each one in turn through the binoculars, without risking however the impoliteness of focusing them.

Professor Kamei in his lofty wisdom had thought of the others, and although he himself drinks tea exclusively he had brought to the train three bottles of beer wrapped together in a wicker hamper. One bottle of ordinary beer, one of dark, and one of extra-light. All tastes should be satisfied.

The train rolled at a good speed between Tokio and Yokohama. To the end of diverting my friends I now distributed the newspapers I had bought.

Unfortunately the day's news was such as to engender a political argument. Politics was the last thing that should have been discussed today. How I regretted the absence of the honorable-foreigner! In the presence of a foreigner such an argument would never have taken place.

Yesterday the obsequies of Professor Warabi, to whose death the papers had given so much prominence, had been ceremonialized. The story was in fact important and symptomatic.

Recently the young Viscount Fujizaka was re-

jected in the entrance examination at the University. This was the first time that such a wrong was ever committed by the University body against the nobility. Particularly outraged, because he had been the Viscount's tutor, Professor Warabi took the train to Sendai, his native city, and in his ancestral mansion, kneeling before the shrine of his forefathers, he performed hara-kiri \* according to the traditional rite. Thus he avenged his honor and especially the honor of his pupil and lord.

The examining board had been forced to resign and the Viscount was to go before a new commission especially named, in a few days. He would be admitted no doubt with honors, but alas! that could not repair the damage done to the country.

The *Hi-no-de*, which is the largest journal in Tokio, gave a most detailed report of the funeral on the front page. Those who perform hara-kiri unfortunately are few these days, and it is necessary to glorify and hold up for the emulation of youth the heroes who thus preserve the code of honor of ancient Japan. The cortège was led by the highest Shinto † dignitaries of the province.

\* This is the word used commonly by foreigners; the Japanese say "seppuku," which is more elegant.

† Shintoism is the state religion in Japan.



The school children followed, boys in file on the left side of the procession ranged in order of height, girls on the right. Each of them carried a spindle-tree branch. There was a military band, and among the dignitaries were the Sheriff and his staff, the Mayor and his deputies, the Chief of Police, a detachment of soldiers, the reserve officers and the Russo-Japanese war veterans. In spite of his advisers Viscount Fujizaka condescended to make the trip and his gesture was favorably remarked. The University, too, sent a representative, which was a lack of tact.

The *Hi-no-de* added that one of our leading moving-picture companies is about to produce, with its best cast, an historical film in which the principal episodes in the life of Professor Warabi will be recorded, as well as that of his death. The film will be shown next month in the principal theatres. Ah, but that indeed will be a moral and a patriotic picture! I shall take the oldest of my sons to see it.

The *Hi-no-de* is at present opposing the policies of the Ministry, which it finds, and with good reason, too liberal. In an editorial it insinuates that the Viscount was not rejected "by mistake," as day-



before-yesterday's bulletin from the University declared; rather he was rejected "knowingly" by certain State officials—a grave allegation.

I do not like these disputes inflamed by political passions. The newspapers have an interest in puffing up scandals in order to increase their sales, and the spirit of the nation is perhaps not entirely so excited as the sheets report.

Unfortunately we fell into a discussion of this incident. My young designer is pleased often to sustain paradoxes; he expostulated that he did not understand how the young Viscount could submit to going before another examining board. It would be a humiliation to him to be treated in this special manner. The Viscount would do better to go abroad to finish his education and not return until all had been forgotten.

I was extremely vexed at these observations on account of the presence of Mr. Yamaguchi, who is a henchman of the Government. In making such a display of radical opinions Mr. Takamori ran the risk of doing great harm not only to himself, but also to me and to my business. This day was likely to be an evil one for the new hat.

Eager to bring the conversation back within

bounds, I explained that, on the contrary, the young Viscount manifested great magnanimity in consenting to present himself again for examination as if nothing untoward had happened. If the Nobility humiliated itself thus in his person and was willing to draw the veil over the offense received, that was only to the end of conciliating and calming the passions of the nation. As was most fitting I glorified this youthful hero.

Then I asked Professor Kamei how such a situation would have been handled in his time. He replied that in his time there could have been no such situation. Never would the honorable-professors have committed so great a professional blunder. For fear that they might make some mistake, they would have admitted all the candidates at once. Moreover, newspapermen who dared to try in this manner to excite people and to lay the country wide to revolution would have had their heads off without more ado inside of six hours.

This comment proceeded from deep wisdom and I found myself in a complete agreement with Professor Kamei. Nevertheless his words annoyed me on account of the presence of Mr. Yamaguchi, who is a journalist.

Insulted in his profession, Mr. Yamaguchi might slyly ruin all the publicity for my new hat. It would be sufficient if he held me up personally to ridicule in one short paragraph. And everyone knows how fond the newspapers are of little squibs of this kind.

In all this discussion Mr. Yamaguchi said not one word. He contented himself with a smile for each speaker. However he alone could have given to the various matters their exact value, since he belonged to two sides at the same time: to that of the newspapermen who were attacking the honorable-Government, and to that of the honorable-Government which was keeping its eye on the newspapers. But he is a remarkable intellect, and, like all lofty souls, Mr. Yamaguchi listens much, talks little, and acts without warning. There is the secret of success.

In order to turn the conversation I announced in a tone of great regret that I had not been able to engage geisha-girls for this evening. Delegations from various Chambers of Commerce had just arrived at Tokio for the Exposition. A session of the Diet had opened and deputies were coming from all over the province. Consequently all the honor-

able-geisha-girls of Enoshima had been engaged.

It is possible to attack the deputies with impunity. They are not part of the Administration. Furthermore, my guests were sure that I was lying in order to surprise them. Had I not been able to obtain for this evening at Enoshima the number of geisha-girls needed in their honor, I would have thrown myself out of the car-window, or rather I would have changed the destination of the excursion.

Indeed, when I telephoned the Hotel Umematsuya to order dinner, I was assured of the presence of six geisha-girls. Two of them were of the first class and I had great trouble getting them; they were sought on all sides. One, Ko-haru-San,\* fifteen years ago was the mistress simultaneously of General Takamatsu and of his eldest son. For this reason many honors have been showered upon her and her triumph is increasing every day. She is a fine conversationalist and the memory of her past adventures lends to her least word a piquant interest.

The other, Rin-go-San,† is by all accounts still,

\* Miss Little-Springtime.

† Miss Little-Forest.

at the age of twenty-seven, a virgin. This singular fact puts her in the limelight: she is a local curiosity. All who have attempted to seduce her have given up their efforts. She accepts jewels; that is all she has in common with the others. And as she is in addition a good musician, she is, at Enoshima, one of the most talked-of geisha-girls.

I was not worried about the other younger girls. They were small fry, and the Hotel Umematsuya is always careful in its choice of "honorable-little-sake-maids."

My guests fell gracefully into the snare of my playfulness and there was a chorus of broken-hearted and soulful condolences. What a tragedy! Again and again we expressed our desolation. It was Professor Kamei who manifested the deepest chagrin—and not for long years now has he been interested in such things! What a worthy and polished gentleman!

I felt better after that. Our mock lamentations were the very sort of conversation for an excursion like ours. In order to keep up the good spirits of the party I opened again my *Hi-no-de* to read aloud a few short items.

The *Hi-no-de* is the best and most cleverly

edited newspaper. It is connected by private telephone with all the quarters of Tokio. The news-items published in it are of a colorful sort calculated to intrigue its numerous clientèle.

One little story that I read was the more interesting of all:

We announce to our readers that the Honorable Baron Nashigata, formerly Minister of Indirect Communications, yesterday afternoon in great secrecy, bought at the shop of Mr. Kitai, jeweller on the Boulevard Ginza, a diamond set in a ring, worth 8,500 yen.

By all accounts this ring is destined for his next lady, the gracious Miss Saka-ko,\* one of the most charming geisha-girls of the establishment of Harutsuki, in the quarter of Shim-bashi. The ring has not yet been presented to the young lady. Everyone knows that the Honorable-Baron Nashigata always presents his gifts in advance; he gives nothing afterwards.

We congratulate the establishment of Harutsuki, already so favorably known, whose pupil, Miss Saka-ko, is becoming one of the most distinguished personages in Tokio. We will keep our readers informed.

The newspaper printed in addition a photograph of Miss Saka-ko, and I handed it to my friends so that they might look at the picture. But as usual this was smudged and inky; one could distinguish

\* Miss Little-Prosperity.

nothing. Indeed it seems to me, although I have no proof, that the stereotypers made a mistake in the make-up. Instead of the picture of Miss Saka-ko, they must have put in that of the honorable-baron; it seemed to me that I could discern moustaches.

Thus cheerful and diverted we arrived at Yokohama. I made ample provision of box-lunches for those of us who were hungry, for although we should arrive at the hotel towards noon, dinner could not reasonably begin before four o'clock.

The train resumed its journey. Fanning ourselves and chatting we ate our lunch. We smoked all our cigarettes and then we turned to the beer, to the milk-caramels, to the honorable-rice and the honorable-tea. The mixture of them is amusing and very healthful.

We were in free and joyous spirits. Sun, refreshment and good company had their effect. I almost proposed a game of "little papers." It is most diverting. Each writes on a slip of paper, one the beginning, one the middle and one the end of a sentence. Finally I would have read the slips, and the result is necessarily a great burlesque. Furthermore, out of politeness, everybody is obliged to ut-



ter a roar of laughter even before the reading of each sentence has begun.

Much to my dismay, during our luncheon Mr. Yamaguchi began to show me a courtesy and a humility overly ceremonious. He wanted to let me understand that he was very displeased at my having disturbed him without reason, since the honorable-foreigner was not there. And so I did not venture to propose "little papers"; he would have laughed too loud, and that would have put us all under constraint.

On entering the coach Professor Kamei had spread under him on the bench a cover of white linen, and had blown up a pneumatic rubber arm-rest. Now he made ready for his siesta.

He stretched himself out, put the arm-rest under his head and his hat over his face. The red carnation on it shone in the sun. His enormous bare feet stood up straight. I looked with admiration upon how neatly the cords of his geta made them seem cloven. That is the mark of honorable age.

Mr. Takamori prepared his camera and took a picture, as a souvenir, of the carnation on the hat of the sleeping professor. The car was vibrating badly but Mr. Takamori's camera is perfect. If the

picture turns out well it will be the most delightful souvenir of the day.

Next Mr. Takamori photographed one of the signs at the station of Ofuna as we whirled through; it is interesting because it is of a new model. Instead of being round as are the old-fashioned ones, this is square in form. We twitted Mr. Takamori for his indiscretion, which went almost as far as espionage, for the Ministry of Railroads surely preferred to keep this improvement a secret.

Mr. Yamaguchi of his own accord let me take his binoculars so that I could amuse myself looking out the window. It was a wonderful instrument, and more than a minute in advance I could tell my guests the texts on the billboards which the train was approaching. At more than a quarter of a league, I could read a soap advertisement. What a pleasant time I had!

The train approached the station of Fujisawa and we had to dress in a hurry. In putting on European clothing, there is an order in which to dress so complicated that one often makes a mistake. Impossible, for instance, to slip into suspenders when one has already got on one's jacket.

I slung my thermos-bottle over my shoulder and got off last from the car. Following behind my friends, who affected not to notice my absence, I stopped a moment in the office of the station-master. After profoundly saluting this eminent functionary, I asked him humbly if he would be good enough to take care of one of my friends, a man of foreign nationality who would arrive probably on the next train. I concluded with a carefully-worded hint as to what it would be right to say if the foreigner was accompanied by some honorable-ladies from Tokio. He would please show these honorable-ladies with all courtesy to the Tokiwa restaurant where they would be treated with deference as my guests and would be able to rest at ease without being disturbed by our noisy and vulgar presence. The exaggeration of the terms of ceremonious politeness which I used in regard to the ladies was in contrast with my choice of the Tokiwa, a respectable place to be sure, but far less distinguished than the Hotel Umematsuya, which is some distance away. Thus I gave the station-master to understand the rank of the honorable-ladies, I insinuated at the same time that the foreigner was not very familiar per-

haps with our customs; and as a logical result the honorable-station-master would act with extreme discretion toward the foreigner and with a firm politeness toward the honorable-ladies. It would have been most rude to the foreigner, the honorable-ladies and the station-master himself, had I spoken of all this more openly.

The station-master understood me perfectly, for he replied that he would give the honorable-ladies the most worshipful attention, and he thanked me even more effusively than he had before when I mentioned his reception of the foreigner alone. This additional commission honored him of course more than the other, which was a trivial charge; it was a matter of utter confidence.

I wanted to have the honorable-ladies accommodated fittingly at the Tokiwa and I planned to telephone from the hotel to have things made pleasant for them. Moreover they would be happier there and less embarrassed than in the same place with us. We in turn would not be uneasy thinking of them in the hotel. All would turn out advantageously.

After thanking me again in some confusion, the

station-master offered me a cup of honorable-tea. Because of my friends, who were waiting for me, without allowing themselves to show the least impatience, I committed the impropriety of refusing; and together we filed out of the station upon the square. We could have taken the street-car to Enoshima. That is the quickest way, but it is quite undistinguished.

I summoned four jin-rickshas and, one after the other, we were soon rolling upon our way. Professor Kamei, the oldest of us, was in the lead; then Mr. Yamaguchi. I humbly came last, far behind.

Our ricksha-boys took us down to the beach of the village of Katase, facing Enoshima. Enoshima is a little island close to the coast. It is very rugged, covered with trees and dominated by picturesque temples. Numerous hotels afford one a pleasant visit. The island is connected with the mainland by a long foot-bridge which runs over a narrow arm of the sea. But the bridge is light and pedestrians only are permitted on it.

I paid off the ricksha-boys and we prepared to cross the bridge on foot. Over there all the houses on the island were gleaming in the sun. I tried to discern the Umematsuya. Once more Mr. Yama-

guchi pressed upon me his glasses. He continued to be extravagantly polite and I was dismayed. That signified his intention more and more and presaged no good for me. Oh, if the foreigner would only come! How remorseful he must be over his discourtesy and the embarrassment that it had caused me! I pitied him.

During these bitter reflections I peered through the glasses and I announced joyously to my friends that the Umematsuya was almost empty. We would be able to enjoy ourselves freely and without any constraint from honorable-neighbors. Fine!

Before leaving the beach Mr. Takamori wanted to take a picture of us standing together. That of course is always done on a picnic. Unfortunately Mount Fuji, which should have stood out from the horizon toward the south and formed the necessary traditional background of the photograph, was hidden from view this morning by the mist. Not only would the picture lack interest, but also indeed the whole day would be marred.

Humbly I presented to these gentlemen my apologies and my regrets.

But Mr. Takamori laughed and told me not to be so downcast. He had skill enough with a paint-



brush to put on the print a Mount Fuji sufficiently white and enormous so that I could hang up the picture in my office without shame.

There was another consideration to which I dared not call the attention of these gentlemen. With the carelessness of youth Mr. Takamori had included on his plate, along with our group, part of the entrance to the footbridge to Enoshima. A placard declared that photographs were prohibited, for two reasons. This is a point on the coast and any section of our shores might serve as a debarkation for the enemy; furthermore, every bridge in Japan is a passage vital to the troops in an emergency. The footbridge to Enoshima is therefore doubly a strategic point, and to take a photograph of it would entail a double term of imprisonment.

Fortunately Mr. Yamaguchi would be in the group and his presence would bear witness to the innocence of our intentions. Nevertheless I would not dare hang the picture in my office. People might tattle. . . . But a happy idea came to me. I would tell Mr. Takamori to paint Mount Fuji just across the entrance to the bridge, so as to conceal it completely. That would be perfect: it

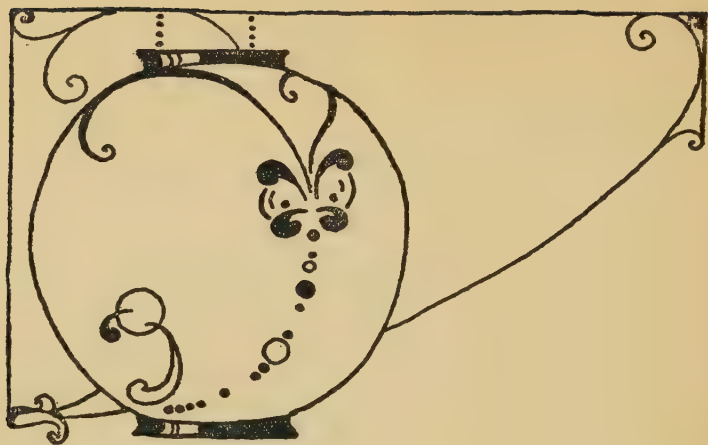


would be a great honor to be photographed so close to Mount Fuji.

We put our carnations well in view and holding our hats with one hand and the light railing with the other we started across the bridge that leads to the picturesque island of Enoshima, which I am so eager to see.

Truly, the island of Enoshima is justly famous. I have several books treating of its ancient history and its geography. Its temples and grottoes are celebrated. My children, who go often to visit them, brought me back some new postal cards last month. I myself go to Enoshima eight times a year, but always in the company of friends, as today. It would be hardly proper for us to explore the island in a group; there are too many common excursionists. And so I know nothing of the island except the interior of its hotels.





### III. SEDUCER

*Butterfly burning*

*On the paper lantern there,  
What know you of her?*

**I**T was Monday and I had an engagement at Enoshima with a dear child whom I met at the Exposition and whom, in my usual fashion, I had conquered at sight.

I was awake at dawn. Turning and twisting in this wretched bed at the Empire Hotel, I resolved little by little upon my plans for the day. I decided to miss the 9:45 train; to the devil with it and with my Japanese host and his party! I would take

the train, following, on which I would be sure to find my little lady. We would prolong our trip farther down the line to Oiso where I knew a hotel which many times already had given shelter to my fugitive affairs.

I hoped my prize would come alone. If she did bring a friend, well, I would manage that. Indeed, if her friend were pretty, my word! that would be merely one more pleasure, and possibly the beginning of amusing intrigues.

It is scarcely a year now since I left my native Switzerland, and in Tokio already I have accumulated some tender memories. I do not seek out venal beauties, geisha-girls or others, such as alone are of interest to the Japanese. I must be loved for myself; and I am inclined rather to affairs with girls of the common people, with the unaffected freshness of youth. Every day I congratulate myself anew on having left my wife at Geneva.

I sat up; sitting on the bed I contemplated my room. Upon a little table there at the right stands a pile of blank sheets of paper, with a title: "Report to the League of Nations." That is the important mission which authorizes my presence in the Far East. But several days will elapse still be-

fore I begin the compilation of this work. I am too busy with my personal pleasures.

Upon the table to the left rises even higher another pile of blank sheets, with a title: "The Coleoptera." But many years are still to elapse before I write the first page of it; I am too busy. It is to be a work of imagination and erudition that I shall reserve to adorn my career. Devil take me if I thought, before coming to Japan, I would ever get interested in that tribe of animals! But when beneath a lamp at night one waits for a young girl who is late for the rendezvous, so many of these cockchafers get up one's sleeves and down one's collar, with such an assortment of horns and claws, that one can't help admiring and collecting them. They are souvenirs of love. They are pinned on a tray in the drawer of my table, and it is already covered with them. I am a sentimentalist and I linger over them often and heave a melancholy sigh. . . .

Complacently before my mirror I dressed, and when I was through I regarded myself from all sides with pleasure. I had a bearing seductive and distinguished. Suit of creamy silk pongee. Shirt of rose-colored silk with pale green stripe. Necktie of

silk tulle which had been cut from the summer shawl of a girl of the country, relic of a forgotten affair. Tie-pin with an enormous pearl—cultivated or paste: I didn't understand just what the jeweller told me. From the breast pocket of my jacket dangled what seemed to be the corners of a silk kerchief. You draw them out and—ha ha! they are only the ears of a cardboard rabbit! A trifle; but it amuses my new friends. This is how I get them into my confidence.

I wore the colonial helmet I had brought from Switzerland, one of aluminum painted white and wound with a piece of garnet-red tulle. A little note of eccentricity does not displease me. What a stupendous effect I would have on my pretty one! I was filled with glee to think of it.

I observed with relief that my watch had passed 9:45. The Japanese must have gone on. Up to the last minute I was afraid that gentleman would get the notion to hunt me out at the hotel. Fortunately he did not know my new address. There was still the danger that he had missed the train, or rather that he was waiting for me at the station. That would be terrible. But all is in all . . . and I took refuge in a Buddhist serenity. We should see!

It was time to leave so as not to miss the 10:20 train; that would have been the end. I turned towards the lobby followed by two hotel porters staggering under my gifts. It is contrary to my principles to make presents, but yesterday I was so preoccupied with the thought of this child that I bought enough to fill three bags. Good looks are not enough if one wants to make a grand slam. That's always my argument.

I got into the automobile I had called. It isn't more than five hundred metres from hotel to station, but it would be an outrage at the hotel, which is rather high-toned, to leave its door otherwise than in a very powerful car, and particularly one with a high rate of fare. One must not give offense to the management.

The car was a magnificent twin-six Packard limousine, the body of stamped steel, super-dreadnought type, enamelled in black with golden butterflies. In front of me were seated two men in hunting costumes, gray leggings and gray felt hat, and in their buttonholes the insignia of an automobile club. They were the two mechanics. As on a warship, responsibility was divided. The one on the left had charge of wheel and control-

levers. He was entrusted with piloting the car. The second mechanic was concerned only with the smooth running of the motor. Even as we were going he crept out and sat down in front on the mud-guard, at the risk of his life, and lifted the hood to observe how the engine was working. His specialty is the replacement of the removable wheels, a job he must handle with elegance and with white gloves, for this always draws a crowd of the curious. In spite of his protestations, this time I myself would have served in his place; I'd be sure to stumble on some new romantic adventure.

At one side on the box squatted a fellow in grandiose white and gold livery, coat-tails flying behind. His was the menial function of opening the door for me when I got out; but at the same time, in crowds, he was to run ahead of the car and give warning of its approach, and see that its admirers did not let themselves get squashed. A meritorious but a hazardous mission; at the least hint of weakness he would be mobbed.

These three fellows didn't scare me at all, but I would have been uneasy getting into the car with the little lady on my arm. Each of them had a greater prestige than mine. One represented intelli-



gence, another fastidious courage, and the third the uniform. Fortunately I was taller and bigger than any of them. My physical qualities compensated.

The car swept powerfully on to the roar of its twelve cylinders; the interior was as big as my bachelor quarters at Geneva, and the seat as softly cushioned as my divan. What memories . . . ! The jolting of the car recalled me to the present. I considered how my two buttocks in the middle of the downy seat nestled as cosily as the two round pearls that I saw yesterday in their casket at Mikimoto's jewelry shop. I would have bought these jewels for the child, but they were quite too expensive. And besides, what on earth would she have done with them?

From the hotel to the station runs an avenue, straight and of a noble breadth. You can drive fast here. But unfortunately it has been closed for several months at its central point, Hibiya Square. On the pretext of moving slightly a tramway switch, they have established excavations dropping sharply to a depth of two meters. The mystery of this work hasn't escaped me. At first I concluded that they were beginning in secret the construction of a sub-

way. But watching the work proceed, I divined the motive. Six months ago the municipality bought in America some new and very costly machines, perfected for road-building. And the authorities wanted to demonstrate that the city engineers could operate these better than the Americans themselves. So they opened a proving-ground at the busiest street-corner, almost in front of the city hall; and the work will not cease until that day when no more throngs of admirers gather to watch this patriotic, instructive and amusing spectacle. To judge by the number of the curious the barricade will remain for fully another year. The show will pass its five-hundredth performance!

One result of this barricade was that my driver was compelled to detour to the right and plunge into a byway which, cut to the measure of ancient Tokio, was approximately the width of the automobile. Ahead of us, there at the corner, was a little bazaar jutting out into the lane, its counters loaded with incomprehensible objects of tin and wicker. How could we make the turn? I trembled for the car.

On lunging into the by-way the mechanic was delighted to see his task made more perilous but so

much more glorious. To impress me the more he made a great show of driving with one finger only on the wheel. What enthusiasm this boldness would have aroused in my little lady! And now he stepped on the accelerator and swung around at the same time. We bumped over something with a rip and crackle of paper. It was the little bazaar which crumpled and gave way beneath the car! In amazement I leaned out of the window. So robust was the automobile that the body was not even scratched. Why, it would be able to smash its way through a whole block of Japanese houses without the least danger! What security for its passengers!

And, driven by a eunuch or a priest, how splendid the limousine would be for a bridal trip! Straight ahead we would go. My charmer would be amused to see so many houses scrunched flat, and I would have been overjoyed to blot out so many rivals beneath my four great balloon tires.

With professional zeal the mechanic slipped out on the mud-guard in front to see if there was any damage to the lights. I was glad indeed that my little one was not there to watch him; her heart would have been wrecked. But indeed this hardihood was disastrous to the bold fellow. Twenty

metres ahead was another sharp turn; the pilot changed his finger on the wheel.

Violently he threw the car at right angles. There was a great crash and the automobile stopped short and rolled over. As well as I could I got out through a window.

We had lost one front wheel and half the motor. The chassis was cut in two as if by a knife. The mechanician was nowhere to be seen; and anyway, it would have been impossible for him to fix up this business. Nowhere did I see our major-domo. Impossible to say when we had wiped him out.

But here is what had happened. My car was one of the intermediate epoch. It had triumphed easily over ancient Japan, but it had come to grief on the new Japan which is just now in convulsions of growth.

This obstacle was no little house of wood, but one of those skyscrapers of reinforced concrete which are rising in Tokio higher every day, like asparagus in a radish bed. They are constructed to resist all manner of cataclysm, and they run the risk only of toppling over in one piece during some monthly earthquake. The Canadian contractors,

however, think they will be able to stand them up again.

Indeed, running my hand over the stone, I noticed with astonishment that the corners were not even chipped! Overhead gleamed an immense white billboard, in English:

# MARUNOUCHI - BUILDING

Ready Oct. 1, 1922

TO RENT

10,000 rooms for office purposes

I smiled to myself, thinking: "That's the building where, from the evening of September 31 on, I will go and loiter in the corridors and lifts. There will be 9,999 rooms each with its pretty little stenographer-telephone girl, her kimono protected by sleeves of black cambric. The ten-thousandth room will be mine and I will have it fitted up discreetly as bachelor quarters. . . ."

On the other side of the huge square the station beckoned me; I had to hurry along. I left the sole survivor fretting in a bewildered manner about the

wreck, and hailed two jin-rickshas. In one I put my bags and into the other I got myself.

On entering the waiting room of the station I perceived that the little lady was not yet there. It would be best to board the train at once and wait there watching for her arrival. Thus I would not alarm her and would not fail to know when she came.

At one side of the gate, on the large blackboard which enables travelers to send messages to each other, I read a dolorous note in bad French, which was addressed to me and which amused me greatly.

"Because I have not been suspended in your noble eye I am prostrate with grief. With my friends I am humbly gone to Umematsuya. If you please, come along honorably. Good by."

They had departed on the preceding train and my soul was filled with relief. What good luck! So far as they were concerned I would have a free field.

I was turning toward the ticket-window, when a guard approached me and handed me politely on behalf of my Japanese friend a return ticket for Fujisawa. That was very considerate of him indeed. In his place I myself would not have thought of it.

There was no way to refuse. But of course I would have to pay something extra on the train on my ticket and that of my charmer, since we would go on farther to Oiso.

Then the guard went on to place in my hands a whole series of unexpected things which quite took my fancy. These were some more gifts. There was an English newspaper, and also some pills and some caramels. What could he think I'd do with these? And there was a carnation of red paper the sight of which threw me into a rage. That was a joke in pretty bad taste, to make so open an allusion to my desire for a little affair. The Japanese act so sily. But perhaps this flower was only a premium distributed with the newspaper.

I put all these things in the pockets of my jacket; they made them heavy and bulging. I told myself I would get rid of the burden at my first opportunity by giving the whole assortment to my little friend.

It was rather early and the passengers were not yet boarding the train. I was led forward under the noses of people standing in line and taken to a coach, where the guard selected for me the best seat, put my bags in the rack, and opened the win-



dows so that I would have plenty of air. Gratifying attentions, but useless: the station is filled with placards in English and I know how to read. Nevertheless they did merit a tip and I handed the guard twenty sen. Modestly he refused the money and departed, bowing to the ground. People who refuse money always make me laugh. Still one more poor fool of an idealist!

When the guard had gone, I moved my luggage laboriously into another coach and chose a seat directly facing the subway from which the passengers would emerge. Thus my little lady would not escape me.

And now from the subway came a clattering of geta, like an imitation of machine-guns in the movies. It was the passengers who were at last permitted to board the train. Eagerly I opened my eyes. A throng gushed forth and uttering sharp cries tided jostling toward the third-class coaches. All excursionists. The Japanese never go abroad except on a picnic. At the same time they love picnics. And this is very fortunate for me; because if the young girls all stayed home, I never would meet them.

It was a swirling chaos of heads and flinging

arms. Drops of sweat were flying, people were guffawing or crying to one another. Lean women were running around like chickens, with babies jolting on their backs and nevertheless dropping off to sleep. Poor little nincompoops! Already their mothers were training them for military service in the cavalry! Fat men ploughed their way through the crowd, and after them struggled families of skinny little brats fighting like the devil to keep in their wakes. I watched them tensely for the arrival of my prize. I might not at once identify her by her face, but I had noted carefully the costume she wore Saturday. A striped kimono in violet tones, and a red sash with a large floral pattern. A brilliant red material, that could hardly be overlooked by the feverish eye of such a bull as I was! But every time it was not she that wore it, but some wench of withered arms and toothless gums and twisted face. I could not see their bosoms—but lord, what they must have been!

I have distinguished two categories among Japanese women. The one I'm interested in comprehends perhaps ten per cent of the young girls between sixteen and eighteen. The other category in which I'm not interested at all includes all the oth-

ers. It is a small percentage, and in Switzerland it would be higher. Fortunately Japan is a country of dense population. There are always many women to be seen, and a heart like mine has always at least something to aim at. I am a sentimentalist.

The crowd thinned away. Only a few belated ones came now, much less excited than the early first arrivals. My anxiety increased as I searched each new face. It was not she.

Where had she gone? Would I ever see her again? Tomorrow morning of course I would already have forgotten her; but until then what grief! In honor of her memory, despite the inconvenience it would put me to, I would this very morning make a sentimental pilgrimage to the Hotel Umematsuya.

Suddenly a bell clanged. It tolled for our departure. Almost at once the train quivered into motion. I clung to the window still yearning. Back there from the subway passage emerged a cluster of women; they were too late, they had missed the train. In front of them all a young girl dismally waved her arms. And I waved back to her an adieu, and an adieu to my hopes. That perhaps was my beloved. But no; her kimono was in a check pattern and her sash was white.

I am a man of action, I never allow myself to be dominated by vicissitudes. Other disappointments even more disagreeable have happened to me in my romantic career; it is desperate emergencies like this that prove a man worthy to be one's friend. I studied the situation scientifically.

First off, she had not declined to come. That is certain, because she loved me. And then too, at the beginning of an analysis, it is necessary to postulate some point which will rekindle one's hope.

First hypothesis: She left on the 9:45 train. She dressed in a hurry this morning in order the sooner to enjoy the companionship of her lover. If I had not been so stupid as to let that train go, we would be together cuddling side by side in the carriage. I would have shown her already my rabbit and I would have let the pills which the guard gave me roll out of his little cardboard behind; it takes so little to make young girls laugh! How gay we would have been!

Unfortunately, nothing of this pretty picture was true. It was merely a dream; and I fidgeted with helpless rage, for I imagined the sweet child in that railroad coach upholstered in blue, alone with those Japanese men whom I had but just met

and whose characters I knew nothing about. Wretch that I was, I had broken my word with this guileless creature. I had neglected to take the right train. Professional blunder! At that very moment when my presence was necessary to protect her I had let her fall, a defenceless prey, into the arms of men who, if they were anything like me, would even now be pressing about her, their faces wan with desire! Frightful vision! Would I yet arrive in time to save her from their wicked designs? I stamped up and down the carriage . . . Aha, that's what it was! The red carnation was a challenge. It signified, "We have her, come and get her if you can!" . . . The dastards!

Nevertheless, this hypothesis was hardly probable and I quickly discarded it. Like a Parisian, a Japanese woman will never be ahead of time.

And after all she would never have been so independent as to change the time set for her departure. She would be too timid for that. I love timid women; they never resist.

The child therefore must be on my train; I preferred that. She had perceived me behind my window, she had not dared to come to me before so many people; and, seeking to conceal herself so

that I should not be hurt, she had been brave enough to undergo the discomfort of a crowded third-class carriage. Throughout the trip she would be thinking of me. These young girls are sensitive, and sometimes extravagantly discreet.

But how had she managed to escape my eye? She must have been silly enough to change her costume: an incomprehensible craze among the women of this country. In Switzerland you can recognize a woman from a distance. One of them will be wearing a hat of tulle with a great plume to match; another, a green bodice cut low to reveal a charming mole. One is ruddy, and one has a luring bosom, and another is pregnant. All these characteristics remain constant for several days at least. Here it is nothing like that. All are dark as India ink. Alas, not one has a bosom! All are pregnant, and the worst of it is you can't even see that. As for their dress, that is impossible. The shape of the costume is always the same and for some reason my birdlings never show themselves two days running in the same plumage. So I am completely bewildered.

In a group I can no longer recognize the darling with whom I made a date the evening before. She is there, but it is her companion who wears the



costume she wore yesterday. I make a mistake between them, that makes me ridiculous, and the romance is ruined. I would have given anything if my guest today had worn her costume of last Saturday. That would have been much more convenient and I would not be in my present difficulty.

Let's suppose rather that my little one missed the train; this was the most probable hypothesis. Just before leaving home, glancing at herself in the mirror, she must have perceived that one lock of hair was pinned wrong, and so she took her hair all down and did it all up anew the better to please me. Or better, examining her kimono, she felt that the ribbon of her chemise was not knotted in a modish bow. She was afraid that I would be shocked. So she took off all her clothes and dressed again, to the last stitch.

Many other contingencies of a like nature were possible, at the same time. So many indeed as to cause her to miss every train that day. There is the extremity to which the desire of doing too well may lead you!

I had a presentiment that it was she whom I had saluted when the train was pulling out of the station. It was she, in spite of the white sash and the



checked kimono. She had recognized me, because she had waved to me.

Why not get off at the station of Shimbashi, to wait for her train and join her on it? How tenderly I would scold her! It would make her cry. After such tender scoldings, reconciliations are always delicious.

That would be madness. I must be reasonable and stay in my coach, awaiting her as long as necessary at Fujisawa. That was the surest way to find her: for me in my wisdom to remain on the train so that my love at last should be gratified.

Lulled by the motion of the train I drifted into a sweet reverie. My spirit always yearning toward beauty, I am prone to poetic meditation. The young girl would come along in the next train, penitent at keeping me waiting so long at the hotel. I might have amused myself by dropping off at each station a new present for her. At Shimbashi, it would be one of my wicker bags, empty. I would instruct the guard, "For a pretty little girl with a red sash," and he would find her all right. Politely he would convey the bag to her. It would be something in which she could pack the presents that would come later. But of course she would

not understand that and she would thank the guard, pleased and bewildered.

At the station of Shinagawa she would be given a pretty camera. Presently she would have ripped it open with a hair pin to see how the inside was constructed. There, instead of a plate, she would find a picture of me. Thus she would come to understand the source of this pleasant playfulness and gratefully she would thank the portrait. As the Japanese never kiss, my sweetheart would caress lingeringly with her first finger the cheeks of the photo. Then because of the people nearby she would hide it carefully away in her left sleeve.

At the station of Omori, I would leave for her a little platinum watch wrapped in silk-paper. She would take it for a pastille and would suck at it for a long time without being able to swallow it. From that moment on the watch would always indicate the same hour. Afterwards, when she understood, how we would laugh!

At the station of Yokohama, the boy would give her a vanilla ice-cream cone paid for in advance by me. Inside something hard would be hidden, on which she would break a tooth. What could it be? Nothing less than a little gold tooth to put in place

of the broken one. What a charming present! Japanese women are very fond of gold teeth and wear as many of them as they can. They shine better than ordinary teeth and they are the chiefest of their jewels. I myself do not like this fashion, but sometimes I make such gifts. A gold tooth is much less expensive than a kimono.

At the three following stations of Hodagaya, Totsuka and Ofuna, as the last great preparatory surprises, my little friend would get no present at all. Finally, at the station of Fujisawa, she would find the most magnificent surprise of the day, that is to say myself, eager to be happy in her arms hearing all that had happened to her.

Two porters would present to her with great ceremony the rest of my gifts. What wonderful things! If I gave them to her one by one, deferring each until the effect produced by its predecessor had worn quite off, I would have enough to make her merry and grateful for several weeks.

In the rack above my head I had three bags. The lightest of them contained three costumes, each including a robe, a sash, and various illogical accessories. Silk goods are not heavy, but alas! they are worth their weight in banknotes. Such gifts are

against my principles and besides I never venture to purchase, by myself, a costume for a young girl. There is an enormous choice. It is impossible not to go wrong. All the imponderables escape me; there are so many unlucky patterns that I don't know about. Here is what happened to me shortly after I arrived in Japan: I offered a darling child a sort of scarf of embroidered crêpe, a present which is effective and at the same time not too costly. I was proud of my selection. It was a pretty youthful pattern that would look very gay on her. She thanked me solemnly and said it would be a most cherished souvenir. She would be happy to wear it, she said, ten years hence when she went to the wedding of her little sister. I had chosen mauve when her age demanded rose. How was I to know? And I had chosen the mauve because the tint harmonized so well with that of my gayest necktie.

After that humiliation I persisted no longer. I prefer now to give the money, telling my sweetheart to choose for herself. I know that she will spend all I give her to the last penny, and even more than that. If any remainder ever comes back to me it is always in kind: a package of cigarettes

or half-a-dozen postal cards. But I do not ask even that.

Yesterday it was different. I had to make my purchases myself, I was so much in love.

I described to the merchant her hair, her beauty, her youth. In the empty air I modelled her little body. Unfortunately I was unable to tell him her birth-place or the horoscope of her family. Then the merchant spread out on a large matting ten costumes, telling me that I would have to buy them all. One of them possibly might turn out to be right. Under the colonial helmet my hair stood on end; it was frightfully expensive. As a favor to me he offered to take back at half price those costumes which did not suit, provided they had not been worn.

By chance and as at a lottery I bought the three least costly, trusting in my good luck. At the lottery, to be sure, you don't buy up all the tickets. And then I reflected that my little lady might quite naively accept all these costumes, the first to wear right away, the second to wear five years from now, the third for her little sister, the fourth for her grandmother, and so on. Who could say? Three would be quite enough.

The second bag was filled with a confused heap of less expensive toilet articles. Soaps in all colors, tooth-brushes, nose- and tongue-scrapers. A thousand products to render the skin white, in the shape of powders, pastes, liquids and even a little piece like a billiard-chalk; and I had added a whole assortment of brushes, puffs and files. Perfumes of French appearance, extra-powerful and especially in the most elaborate bottles I could find. How happy she would be! And a brush for her eye-lashes, because they are so long that they will tickle my nose when I kiss her. . . .

And finally jewels. No rings, pendants, bracelets, brooches or necklaces. The Japanese fortunately have never learned the use of these. Only hairpins and combs, and just one or two little rings to lend a modern touch. I bought a lot of jewelry. It is bulky and costs very little, which is in its favor. It is made of celluloid, of pasteboard and of tin.

The third bag contained playthings. It took me some time to learn, but I know now just what will please young girls. There was a little portable phonograph with twenty records. A phonograph—what a noisy, fascinating and incomprehensible thing! One puts one's head inside in vain, one cannot see



the little mouth that speaks. I loathe phonographs, but my little lady will soon render this one inoffensive, persisting in winding it up backwards.

Next, I had an electric light bulb of 200 candle-power, which makes a magnificent light. And if one gazes at it steadily everything seems black for a few minutes. A cute new game for this evening.

My list of presents was completed by an air-rifle to shoot at butterflies this afternoon, and an Ever-sharp pencil in gold plate: the most striking adornment for the hair. This pencil was the big piece in my fireworks.

According to the custom of the country, each of these objects was wrapped in a sheet of white paper, tied with a string of red and white paper, in which was knotted a cone containing a bit of dried herring. Otherwise they would not have been considered gifts. She would have kept them, but they would not have counted.

But first of all it was necessary to find my little lady. My plan, sure to be successful, was as follows:

1. To leave the train at the station of Fujisawa and watch every girl that got off there. If the child were among them, I would take her in my arms and we would get right back on the train. She



would learn why later, when we had arrived at the little hotel in Oiso.

2. If I did not find my little one, I would wait incognito in the station, reading the newspaper to stay my hunger: for it would be noon. On the arrival of the next train I would take the child in my arms and we would hurry away to the very end of Japan if necessary. We would have a little something to eat first, however.

3. If by one o'clock in the afternoon I had not found the pretty child in the red sash, which seemed unlikely, then I would go on to the Hotel Umematsuya to join my ill-met host and his party and devise some new and crafty plan of action.

The complications of these adventures among the orientals fascinate me, and in Tokio I almost never bother myself with the European colony. But the chief reason for that is as follows:

In general the ladies of the diplomatic corps do not concern themselves with being pretty; they are aware that they have other superior qualities. While flirting respectfully with them I have permitted myself to throw warm glances toward other ladies of less exalted rank.

Now, on my first presentation in the society of the ambassadors, at a tea-dansant at the Empire Hotel, I fell prostrate before some beauties that made me fairly swoon. Alas, so far as my love for them went, I was neither titled nor a diplomat by career. I was plunging toward an abyss. I would lose utterly my time and my health.

Prudently I burned my bridges; I let it be understood that I had neglected to bring dress clothes from Europe. The result was immediate. I was not invited to a single dinner, or even to a luncheon. . . .

Musing upon memories of love, I felt myself invaded by a pleasant sleepiness, in the cadenced rock-a-bye of the speeding train. . . .





#### IV. RECEPTION

*Cascade kneeling  
At the bosom of the hoary rock:  
A moving vision!*

I AM the station-master at Fujisawa. My duties are exalted and every morning on awaking I give thanks to His Majesty the Emperor for having confided to me this honorable and important trust. I devote myself to it with all my ability and all my zeal. I am rewarded, I believe, by the satisfaction of my superiors.

Just at present, however, I have been charged by an honorable-compatriot with a mission quite outside of my experience hitherto, which has left me disconcerted. It comes nevertheless within the scope of my functions. It involves my taking care

of an honorable-foreigner who is travelling probably on train 79, and giving special attention to the women of his party.

This honorable-mission was too great and too serious for me alone. I telephoned to the Chief of Police of the village. Indeed it was my strict duty to forewarn him of the arrival of any foreigner at the station.

Five minutes later he was in my office. Hurriedly we took counsel. The Chief of Police is a man of lofty courage whom I admire and especially whom I respect profoundly. The important problem was as follows; How should we receive the honorable-traveller?

He immediately telephoned the Central Bureau of Police at Tokio for instructions. Over the telephone he was given at once a confidential extract from the police record of the honorable-foreigner.

In view of the circumstances and the necessity of immediate action, he handed me his notes without a word. I was filled with an immense joy and gratitude. What a memorable honor! Never would I have dared to hope to be admitted into the confidence of a police secret! What a noble proof of reliance! What dignity he conferred upon me! I

bowed many times and very low before him in acknowledgment. Finally I read the message, which was as follows:

"Personage of distinction: Delegate Extraordinary of the Commission of Social Ethics of the Bureau of the League of Nations.

"Distinguishing marks: Has in preparation upon his desk an erudite work upon the coleoptera.

"Matters for observation: 1. Possesses a dictionary of Esperanto, which is an international language. Ascertain therefore whether he is in communication with the Siberian Republic of Chita. 2. Is seen incessantly with women, always different. Ascertain whether he is occupied in subversive feminist propaganda.

"Up to the present no charges brought on either of these two points.

"Conclusion: Individual to be treated with honor."

There was not a minute to lose. By the private telephone of the railroad I inquired at the station at Tokio. The honorable-traveller had indeed taken train 79, second-class coach No. 5329. In order to help me identify him if by chance he had moved into another coach, the number of his ticket was 277,423. As a precaution I telephoned also to the station at Yokohama where train 79 was about to arrive.

The honorable-traveller was not accompanied by ladies. One less difficulty for me! What remained was only a pleasure.

During this time the Chief of Police sent his Ford car in quest of the rest of his force, that is to say of one officer, since the second is always on duty at my station to keep watch on travellers.

Myself, I summoned my assistant station-master and through him instructed my staff to be on the alert, to wash and to put on full dress.

The Yokohama station just then reported that the honorable-traveller was now in coach No. 7843. He did not stir and pretended even to be asleep. But, as if by coincidence, he had been joined by three occidental ladies, accompanied by a gentleman.

The Chief of Police did not show his feelings, but I divined that he rejoiced to see this situation, in which probably he would be able to lay bare an important plot against the Empire, take on complications. On this point I had nothing to worry about. My duty was plain. It was to receive the honorable-traveller in a worthy fashion, according to the command which had just been conveyed to me by His Majesty the Emperor.

In due politeness I telephoned Enoshima and informed my compatriot that his friend would arrive alone and on the next train. I was silent naturally in regard to all the police information, including the number of the coach and the presence of the occidental ladies.

Before my spirit now arose the vital question of precedence. The moment of the reception approached. Who should be first in line, the Chief of Police or myself? The problem seemed beyond solution.

I represented officially the Department of Railways, and, as deputy of His Eminence the Minister, I was charged with the duty of greeting upon his arrival the honorable-personage who had condescended to make use of one of our instruments of transportation, coach No. 7843 of train 79.

But the Chief of Police, here with me, represented the police—which is above all other departments as the right hand of His Majesty the Emperor.

On the other hand I have a command numerically more important. Counting only the day shift, I muster under my orders an assistant station-master and five employees, including the boy who



sells newspapers on the platform. As for him, he possesses only two officers and a young man of sixteen who drives his car. However, he has a sword. My department, lacking funds to assure us a fitting appearance, has not yet given swords to officials of my grade and I must content myself with a whistle which I carry slung from my shoulder, buried in a white tassel.

It might be damaging to me if the honorable-foreigner declared he had been received in an insignificant manner by the station-master at Fujisawa, but it would be much more dangerous for me to displease my honorable-friend the Chief of Police.

I bowed therefore very humbly and offered him and his force first place in the reception. To my astonishment he replied that out of deference toward the Department of Railways he desired to take a subordinate position.

I understood that it was only the better to fulfil his police duties and I was smitten with admiration before his moral integrity. He would be humiliated before the honorable-foreigner, but exalted in my spirit. In courtesy I refused his generous offer. He repeated it. I refused again. And we

continued thus over and over again, each bowing lower every time before the other. Complying with the laws of etiquette I could not allow a decision to be forced until the panting of the locomotive was heard on the track outside. The train stopped and the honorable-traveller appeared at the door. On catching sight of us he gave a start of pleased surprise. He could never have hoped for so impressive a greeting.

Ten paces before him I held myself at attention; white uniform impeccably pressed, helmet of red and gold. Behind me ten paces was my staff, drawn up in hierarchic order at intervals of five paces. Each bore the insignia of his position. My assistant had a whistle slung from his shoulder like mine, but without the tassel. The guard who took tickets and also handled baggage carried a large paste-brush; that was more easily seen than his ticket-punch. The switchman had his switch-lever, the two yardsmen had fastened their suspenders cross-wise. At the end of the line the boy presented his tray of newspapers.

Ten paces behind my assistant stood the girl who sells the tickets. I had not planned to include her in the ranks—by reason of her sex she occupies so

inferior a position. My assistant, however, had summoned her to swell our numbers, and by order she stood there petrified, her pencil behind her ear.

The Chief of Police had placed himself at one side, some distance away and stiff as a ramrod: white uniform, boots with elastic sides, gold helmet and shoulder-straps. Behind him at ten paces his young auto-driver, kimono of cotton-crêpe and police helmet.

The two police officers were not there. They were busy running up and down the train, for the Chief of Police had ordered that no other traveller should be allowed to get off. None, to be sure, would have dared get off.

Then we saluted the honorable-visitor. I and my staff gave the military salute, and the Chief of Police performed a magnificent flourish of the sword. He and I stepped forward together and presented our calling-cards to my honorable-guest. In two modest words I expressed how highly the station of Fujisawa was honored in thus being selected by him from among so many more important stations, and I apologized for the insufficiency of our reception. After dismissing my staff I led my honorable-guest into my office to offer him a

cup of honorable-tea. My two yardsmen proudly took possession of his luggage.

The Chief of Police was not there. I apprehended that he was uneasy about the absence of the Occidental ladies. His first officer was confirming the identity of the other travellers who were now getting off, his second officer was confirming that of those who remained on the train. The chief himself got into second-class coach No. 7843 and there he was evidently looking to see if the ladies were not hiding under the benches. For why would they have got off en route? One does not board a train merely to get off.

Some few minutes later the Chief reappeared, holding in his hand a monstrous European umbrella. This must have been a most important piece of evidence, for he said not a word to me about it.

I proposed to my honorable-guest that we make a tour of my station and inspect it in all its details. In spite of his repeated courteous protestations, I finally convinced him that he was not causing me any inconvenience, and I conducted him out of the office, preceded at a respectful distance by my assistant.

First we went to see the switch. It is never used

because it turns into a siding and there are no cars to leave there. I gave the command to the switchman to pull down his lever. Notwithstanding his strength he could not budge it. I apologized vigorously to my guest, but there was nothing to be done: unfortunately the wheels of the locomotive had stopped just at the wrong place.

Next we went back to the station where he witnessed the checking of a parcel. Before my assembled staff I demonstrated the entire process and at the end I myself pasted on the parcel the destination card. The pasting was perfect, without a wrinkle. It must have made an excellent impression on my staff.

As a favor to my guest I offered to weigh him on the baggage scales. What a figure he made the arrow jump to! It exceeded the maximum weight authorized for a piece of passenger-train baggage; we burst into cries of admiration. Next I weighed myself; and then in token of friendship we weighed ourselves standing on the scales together, hand in hand. This would have made a fine picture for the papers.

I took care that he should not pass behind the scales, so that he would not discover the secret of

them, in which our national defense is concerned. If one does not first disengage a special little lever, one may pile up one's baggage on the scale in vain; the arrow will stay at zero! Thus, the enemy would not be able to make use of it.

Then we went to the ticket agent's office. This was the one feature of his visit which interested him most. My young girl was quite confused at having a gentleman of such a weight and such considerable dimensions examine her work. I was happy to see that he propounded various questions to her regarding this important branch of my service. My assistant went outside of the ticket window and played the rôle of a traveller. The girl had to explain and demonstrate in minute detail just how she took the money, chose the ticket, stamped and entered it, and returned to the traveller simultaneously ticket and change. During this time he caressed her cheeks in the occidental manner, so that she should not be frightened.

Afterwards he wanted to write himself in the registration book. He did not know our script very well and it was necessary for her to help him. Notwithstanding that she sat upon his lap in order to guide his hand, he was only able to smear three



pages full of illegible characters. He had put his left hand under the sleeve of her kimono and involuntarily he happened to tickle her, but she did not venture to say anything. He was willing and if the stool had not broken down he would have continued his efforts, with no more success than at first, clear to the end of the register. Which proves that in spite of their efforts foreigners are not intelligent enough to learn to write.

On leaving, the honorable-traveller turned to the young girl and gave her as souvenirs a red paper carnation, a package of "Morinaga" caramels, and a man's fan. These gifts were too beautiful for her humble station and, with the exception of the man's fan, carefully selected. My assistant looked on stupefied, asking himself what magnificent present comparatively he was going to get. The traveller handed him a box of matches, a package of "Hikishima" cigarettes and finally a sack of "Jin-Tan" pills. It was admirable of him to think of the pills. The remedy after the poison!

As for me I was lost in lofty reflections. Considering my relative eminence, what sublime gift would fall to my lot? The foreigner seemed to meditate; then he drew from an inside pocket an



enormous American newspaper which he presented to me graciously. I was transported by joy and wonder and my admiration for him was complete. I bowed to the very earth. I do not know how to read American, but in supposing me capable of doing so he did me publicly an immense honor. Never had I dared to hope for so much. I felt that I stood in the presence of a great lord. In his own country surely he must be a prince of the blood.

And I asked him humbly as a remembrance to sign his name on the front page above the title.

To conclude this tour of inspection in a worthy fashion, I had reserved for the end a demonstration of the departure of a train, a manœuvre which shows the station-master surrounded by his staff and in all his dignity. We returned therefore to the platform where for twenty minutes train 79 had been waiting the order to leave. The safety valve was spitting fiercely, which made an even better impression.

Unfortunately the next train for Tokio was not due for forty minutes. Otherwise I would have had the two trains depart at the same time, in opposite directions, on one signal of my whistle. What a

spectacle! Surely he never saw anything like it. But it would have been indeed too magnificent; Japan is a humble nation and I had only one train at my disposal. I explained all this to my honorable-guest.

The manœuvre went off beautifully. My assistant ran to take his position on the baggage-wagon. I gripped my whistle between two fingers of my right hand. My assistant raised his arm. I waited a moment and then I blew with the necessary vigor. After another moment the locomotive replied; the wheels began to turn all in the same direction. Soon the train was out of sight.

That is the way one dispatches a train.

When it had gone I invited my honorable-guest to rest from his fatigue in my office. I had had the papers cleared off my desk; it was covered with a red rug and supplied with ash-tray, cigarettes and fans.

The Chief of Police rejoined us. We sat down together amicably and my assistant served us honorable-tea, after which he vanished. The Chief of Police also had ordered my subordinates to clear the building. That was to avoid any possible indiscretions.

It was my duty to make a speech and I arose. My speech was elegant and well-turned. I told the honorable-traveller how honored the Department of Railways was, that he had confided thus to our care his precious person. I apologized with humility for all the inconvenience he had had to suffer. Our tracks are not of so broad a gauge as those in Europe and our coaches consequently are not large enough for a man of his stature. And we do not put up in our cars, as they do in Europe, colored photographs of the picturesque scenery along the way. That would have enabled him to avoid the exhaustion of getting off to see Enoshima; he would have been satisfied after contemplating a picture of it for an hour and a half during the trip. Finally, we are so unhappy as never to have railroad accidents such as they are able to arrange in Europe: there is consequently a lack of interesting incidents. I apologized very abjectly in the name of the Minister of Railways. In conclusion I told him with what impatience all Japan in general and myself in particular awaited the publication of his colossal works, and especially his learned study upon the Coleoptera, these being our national insects.

My speech pleased him for he deigned to evince a restrained surprise. However vain he was, he could not have hoped that word of his researches was so widespread.

The Chief of Police spoke in his turn. I admired his professional ease. After some compliments and generalities, he assumed a very modest tone of voice and with a benevolent interest asked the honorable-traveller some questions about himself and his family.

He asked if he had any children, if these children knew how to read, and in this case which among the Japanese political newspapers they read.

He congratulated the honorable-traveller on having left his overcoat of Siberian bear-skin at the hotel, on account of the warm weather. As the honorable-traveller did not have such a coat, he advised him to go bear-hunting in the region of Lake Baikal. Thus he would procure a bear-skin coat at very low cost.

The Chief of Police touched upon a sensitive point in the matter of feminism. He declared that he himself was converted to the idea of woman-suffrage, but he had not yet found a decisive argument. He requested the honorable-foreigner there-

fore to suggest one, if by chance he knew any.

At these words the honorable-foreigner leaped abruptly to his feet and, in the occidental manner, shook in his two hands one of the hands of the Chief of Police. He exhorted him to renounce these infernal notions, even adding textually that three weeks in Switzerland or two days in England would be enough to make him vomit up this baleful utopia.

The Chief of Police manifested no emotion, but I understood how he congratulated himself on having provoked so suspicious an outburst. He had collected thus a number of little bits of information, which in themselves had no importance, which together it seemed to me had very little more; but which, added to all those which the Central Bureau of Police at Tokio was writing every day in its books, would at length come to have a decisive significance.

Our conversation languished and the honorable-traveller refused another cup of honorable-green-tea. He got up and we did likewise.

The Chief of Police said to him that he would keep always fresh in his mind the fragrant memory of our honorable-guest. His duties prevented him

from accompanying our guest to Enoshima, but he counted it an honor to give him his Ford car, to take him as quickly as possible to his uneasy friends.

The foreigner thanked him warmly and we proceeded to the automobile into which they had already put his bags. It was not fitting that he have but one chauffeur. I had my newsboy get in the car beside the police driver. He was no longer indispensable at the station since he had sold all his papers, except a few from the night before last, which are less frequently called for.

The Chief of Police once again apologized for not accompanying the foreigner farther. I myself apologized also, explaining that unfortunately my presence at the station was necessary in order to despatch trains 113 and 72, which would arrive almost at the same time.

My subordinates were drawn up at some distance and gave a military salute. The foreigner wanted to say goodbye too to the young girl. I refused him this, it was too polite on his part; and it would have given the girl an importance which would quite have disorganized my command. He begged me, and each time I bowed the longer without seeming to understand.



The car slowly got under way. The foreigner continued to gesticulate and to utter incomprehensible cries. Suddenly he brandished an object in the shape of a cardboard rabbit, which he had carried hidden in the front pocket of his jacket and which, up to that moment, I had taken for a handkerchief. He handed it to me frantically, pointing at the station and exclaiming, "A souvenir for the girl." I comprehended that this was a commemorative decoration which he conferred upon me at the moment of taking leave, and I accepted it respectfully. I must say that I had almost counted upon it.

The car had gone. I had been very curious over the importance of the honorable-traveller's bags, for ordinarily one does not carry so many pieces when one is going out to dine with friends. Apologizing for my indiscreet curiosity I asked the Chief of Police, falteringly, if he found it imprudent to give me a hint as to what was in them.

Smiling, the Chief of Police answered that there was no secret about it. He had even neglected to open them with his skeleton-keys, because he knew in advance just what he would find. He was familiar with occidental customs. On joining the police



he had passed the examination on this important subject with the mark "Good."

It seems that these people are not able to eat rice and dried fish, like everybody else; they insist upon a queer kind of food. The honorable-foreigner therefore carried in his three bags the foreign products which would be prepared for his dinner to-night.

The Chief of Police then asked me if he could have for a few minutes the exclusive use of my office, which I accorded him with pleasure. I understood that he wanted to question his officers, and to meditate upon our friendly conversation with the foreigner; a conversation which his first officer had taken down stenographically in an adjoining room.

Finally he would telephone all his information to his superiors at Tokio, in a manner as detailed as possible but without any classification of the facts. That is prohibited, and he would have been incapable of it. The longer his telephone message, the more certain he will feel of having contributed to the protection of His Majesty the Emperor, which is so involved with our patriotic duty. I envied him his lot. Six months from now, a superior officer on a tour of inspection will perhaps allude

to his exploits of today—but that would be too, too splendid. His present satisfaction was a sufficient recompense.

When he went into my office, I saw from outside that his second officer handed him a long object carefully tied up in brown paper, and sealed on all sides with red wax. That must have been the mysterious umbrella.

All this did not concern me and I walked up and down the platform of my station, given over to agreeable reflections, and examining the honorable-badge in the shape of a cardboard rabbit. Insofar as regarded me, everything had gone off triumphantly, my staff had operated without an error, I had fulfilled with distinction my obligations as host. The foreigner's admiration surely must have been aroused for the functioning of the public service agencies in Japan, and he would cherish a memory of this welcome at once delightful and instructive: he knew now how we distribute tickets to travellers.

There remained for me now only to make out my report and get it approved by the Chief of Police; perhaps I would be given a promotion, or even a sword!

I had been meditating thus for ten or twelve minutes, when I saw my newsboy come panting back all out of breath on a bicycle too big for him. He was as wet as if he had crossed the track in a typhoon. And indeed he told me that he had just fallen into the ocean.

This is how the incident came to pass. In order to reach the island of Enoshima, one must cross the water by a foot-bridge which is quite long—three hundred fathoms—and which rises five or six fathoms above the sea. As is customary it is of light construction, to facilitate repairs. It is built of bamboo piles stuck in the sand and supporting a zigzag causeway formed of planks and plaited straw. From time to time, if the wind blows north, or if a rather high wave comes along, or if a drifting boat grazes a pile, the bridge is cut in two. But it means money and it is soon restored to condition.

In consequence a placard declares that bicycles and other vehicles are prohibited, and two guards are there, exacting from pedestrians a toll which goes to maintain it.

The chauffeur drove resolutely out on to the bridge, with the firm intention of fulfilling his

mission, which was to convey his important passenger to the hotel. The guards made as if to halt the automobile, but recognizing the police helmet that the chauffeur was wearing, they dutifully prostrated themselves, and tore down as quickly as they could the little barrier which prevents the passage of vehicles.

The automobile began to roll slowly over the bridge, which was rather frail for its weight. It seemed that some of the cross-boards gave way now and then beneath the hind wheels. The honorable-traveller, in a moment of pusillanimity which it is not for me to judge, decided to get out and proceed on foot in front of the car. This followed at a short distance, bringing his bags. Suddenly, at a particularly weak point, the bridge gave way beneath it. My young employee told me that he had had scarcely time to collect his wits before, with a great crash, he found himself in the water. The accident attracted instantly a crowd of two hundred people. He himself climbed up a pile back onto the bridge; he borrowed a bicycle and some geta, for his own were floating somewhere on the sea; and he came as quick as he could to report to me.

In brief, an ordinary and not at all serious episode.

The noble foreigner after all had not been injured, and on the other hand the spectacle must have amused him.

The bridge had been destroyed, but probably it was already repaired. The reserves of the village of Katase had been mobilized for that purpose. Excellent training for our soldiers. The expenses would be reimbursed within 48 hours simply by doubling the tolls.

In five feet of water lay the automobile with its wheels in all directions. But this was of no importance, for the Police are rich. It would be reckoned in the budget of the cost of surveillance of foreigners, a budget that supports many other things; and the Chief of Police would get a new car within a week.

The luckiest of all was the driver. He had had the good fortune to suffer a broken leg and a dislocated arm. These would be considered as wounds in active service, and as soon as he recovered he would be promoted to the wheel of a more powerful car.

A slight annoyance: my young employee's geta

were lost. There would be no compensation from the Police for these, as he was not there in the capacity of police officer, but in the name of the Department of Railways. In consideration of his heroic conduct, I promised him the new geta of my eldest son.

A second vexatious point, considerably more serious: they had not recovered the honorable-foreigner's bags. Weighed down by their bulk they must have sunk deep in the soft sand. Lobster and eel were savoring now the curiosities of European victual. The foreigner would dine poorly tonight. What chagrin, and what a pity! Up to this point his reception must have enchanted him.

Hardly had I formulated these conclusions when my switchman came running headlong to tell me some extraordinary news.

"A mysterious Korean anarchist, hunted all the way from Tokio by one of our alert police agents, had just blown up the bridge to Enoshima, letting his automobile which was loaded with bombs explode on it behind him. In spite of a leg mangled by the explosion, the agent had kept after the fugitive, swimming, and had struck him down with his knife. Justice was done. There remained only to

capture a young accomplice, who, soon after having touched off the bombs, escaped on a bicycle at terrific speed."

What a wonderful feat of arms for our Police was this, and how the foreigner must have admired it! For he had had the opportunity to witness it at close quarters.

I flung off toward my office to congratulate the Chief of Police, but I was halted by my assistant, who came racing toward me with all the strength of his short legs, his arms wildly waving. His countenance gleamed with joy.

"The war at last! That war we've been awaiting for ten years—which our powerful enemies have sought craftily to compel us to declare, by their repeated humiliations. Tired out by our patience they have unmasked their deceitful machinations.

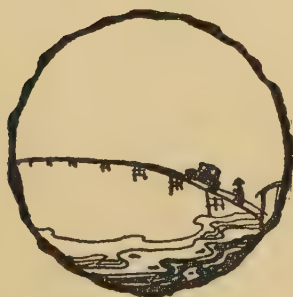
"Treacherously and without declarations of war, coming in advance of an immense fleet of which the smoke already was visible, an enemy submarine had just torpedoed the bridge to Enoshima. The explosion was frightful. The island was lost, but let it go! There was nothing to fear for already, to prevent any debarkation, our brave reservists were drawn up in battle array on the sands of Katase."



I did not suspect at first how, unfortunately, this news also was false; and confronting the East whence loomed the enemy fleet, I cried three times and each time more defiantly:

"Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!" \*

\* "Ten thousand years!" To be translated by "Hurrah!"





## V. THE HONORABLE-HOT-BATH

*Washed by the sea,  
The rocks of Futami  
Are clean and candid.*

AS proprietress of the Hotel Umematsuya I went down to the bridge to welcome the occidental professor. My patron, the honorable-manufacturer, stayed with his friends at the hotel and begged me to represent him before His Lordship. For appearances I took with me one of the eldest of my servants, Hana-San,\* who is nineteen.

After a long wait we perceived an automobile

\* Miss Blossom.

starting out on the footbridge. That is dangerous and never happens; I was astounded at this extraordinary occurrence. Hana-San told me that this must be His Excellency the Minister of Bridges and Foot-bridges on a tour of inspection; he alone would have put himself in such a position. I myself had a presentiment, but I didn't venture to say anything.

In the middle of the bridge he got out. I gasped. His height exceeded that of Their Excellencies the Minister of Bridges and the Vice-Minister one on top of the other. It was he! It was His Lordship, the occidental professor! I stretched out my arms toward him and burst into tears.

He came on, walking now in front of the automobile so that people could see him better. The whole island was already in a furore. What dignity, what regard for his appearance! What a noble sight!

Then came the catastrophe. I thought at first that it was on purpose. His Lordship was not hurt, but the shock nevertheless made me sob.

We were soon at the hotel, and an immense crowd looked on when His Lordship sat down on the doorstep to take off his shoes, a necessary for-

mality. He could not get on any of the slippers in the establishment; his feet were too big, and he had to stay in his stocking-feet.

I took him then to the room where the banquet was to be served, and I suggested that he join the gentlemen who were waiting for him in the honorable-hot-bath. Full of zeal and curiosity my young servant-girls quickly stripped off his clothes. As soon as he was undressed I myself threw a kimono about him, the most beautiful one in the hotel.

I was very happy to lead His Lordship to my bathroom, which is the finest room in the place. It is in two parts: an entrance, a step down and in trellis-work, where there are taps, basins, wooden tubs, little benches, sea-weed sponges, big wooden ladles; all that one needs to wash with. The other part is floored with tiles. In the middle there is a square hole filled with hot water: that is my bath.

The remarkable thing is that my bath is extremely large. Although at the Hotel Tomiya across the street they can hardly accommodate more than three persons, in my place six at a time

can get in without crowding, and even more if there are children or girls among them.

Just the other day I had the honor of entertaining an honorable-family from the city of Toyohashi, visiting Tokio for the Exposition, and I had the pleasure of seeing the entire honorable-family in the bath at the same time. There was the grandfather, the father, the grandson, the grandmother, the mother, the two young daughters and the three babies. You couldn't see anything but knees and heads! It was charming! We all clapped our hands it was so wonderful. I wept for joy. I sent over for my colleague, the proprietress of the Hotel Tomiya, so that I could enjoy seeing her envy. I regret very much that I didn't think to call the photographer who would have made up for me some postal-cards for publicity. What a chance for advertising I let slip!

We went into the bathroom. Squatting on a little bench, Professor Kamei was having his back scrubbed by my old masseur. He was already in that same position when I left these gentlemen an hour earlier, and I asked myself what would be left of him to scrub, he is so thin. He must like to have

his back scratched. Mr. Yamaguchi was sitting on the edge of the bath, his legs in the water, chatting with the two other gentlemen who were plunged in the honorable-hot-bath.

At once I drew off His Lordship's kimono; it was indecent for him to stay dressed before these naked gentlemen. Our arrival attracted everybody's attention. I could easily tell which of these gentlemen were familiar with the eccentricities of the occidentals and knew how easily they are often scandalized by a little nakedness. Professor Kamei, whose long beard hung down in a single sudsy spiral, tried to spread out a fan to hide the lower part of his body. Likewise Mr. Yamaguchi let himself fall into the bath with a loud splash. On the other hand my patron and his designer came rushing out of the water to greet His Lordship.

My patron seized a hand which he held and shook a long time in the European manner, making all sorts of complimentary remarks. He introduced Mr. Takamori who began to shake the other hand. I crouched down in the farthest corner to keep away from the splashing.

At present there was in my hotel one of the most honorable patrons, an aged lady, of the wealthy

bourgeoisie of Tokio, who had brought her convalescent grand-daughter for a few days in the fresh air. These two women happened to be in the bathroom then, and they took advantage of His Lordship's preoccupation to slip along the wall and go out without a word.

I considered their leaving rather unnecessary. For after all the honorable-dame was squatting down when we came in, she had a flat bosom, and in the old-fashioned way she had shaved her hair on the death of her husband. If she had not stirred, His Lordship would not have been shocked. He would have continued to take her for a man. As for the little girl of nine, she could hardly scandalize him!

My honorable-patron introduced to His Lordship his eminent friend, Professor Kamei, whose learning he spoke of highly. The latter stood with the upper part of his body bent over to the very floor. It occurred to me that this was so that his beard could serve as clothing.

After murmuring numerous compliments and decrying his own ignorance in scientific matters, Professor Kamei drew himself up and asked His Lordship for a little information that would be of great assistance to him. Then in an even voice he



pronounced the following extraordinary sentence:

"Infinitely honorable-excellence, pardon pray my grave importunity, but I made bold to hope that you might have the kindness to have the benevolence to have the nobility to have the munificence . . ."

I can no longer remember the middle of the sentence, which was most courteous, but at length he finished thus:

". . . to do me the honor of vouchsafing to tell me what was the system of mortgages in the Celtic kingdom in the age of the Round Table."

I did not understand this question, but I surmised that it had to do with a fabulous animal which ravaged Europe, and that Professor Kamei wanted to see if His Lordship could tell how many paws one of these animals, the most important in his native country, had. You could be sure that Professor Kamei well knew the answer. They always know, when a gentleman or a professor especially asks a question.

His Lordship let a long time pass without replying. He stared straight into space over the professor's back, and couldn't say anything but "Bu . . . bu . . . but . . ."

Then Professor Kamei bowed even lower, and even more courteously repeated his long sentence. In order to make himself better understood he gave a French translation of each hard word. His Lordship kept silent.

It was becoming a magnificent sight! How! Professor Kamei, a modest Japanese, was in Europe only in ancient times; he could not have seen the Beast more than once, and yet he had had the sublime thought to count its paws and mark them down in his note-book, the little ones in front. On the other hand His Lordship, the eminent occidental professor, had nothing at all to say—he was a compatriot of the Monster and who, when he was a baby, must have gone on his mother's back every Sunday to see it at the menagerie!

Here was the downfall of foreign science! An unbounded triumph for the science of Japan! A glory for my hotel! My bathroom would become historic! I would be able to show the exact spot! I could make people pay to see it! . . . Unable to contain myself any longer I began to sob convulsively with joy. In a few seconds my sleeves were wet with tears.

Instinctively I felt that my presence was profane

at that moment. I was not worthy to witness so august a scene. I am ignorant and without diplomas, and above all I am a woman, an impure and insignificant being. These gentlemen who thus were opposing their wisdom were of the sublime sex, and even more than that they were professors. So I began to back out of the room, bowing at each step and still unable to stop weeping.

At this moment His Lordship was saved from the gulf in which his prestige had just been swallowed up, and Mr. Yamaguchi was the hero. Coming half out of the bath and stretching out his arm as if to grasp his hand, he questioned His Lordship crying:

*"Comment trouvez-vous les jeunes geisha japonaises?"*

I did not understand this sentence any better than the other; I concluded that once again it was a scientific matter. But Mr. Yamaguchi explained to me later that, wishing to give His Lordship an opportunity to recover himself, he had chosen the easiest question he could think of, and he had spoken in the occidental language to make his meaning clearer and also to show that he knew French.

When I learned about this I burst into tears. You couldn't see anything finer at the theater. What a magnificent spirit! What chivalry, even to the extreme refinement of politeness, speaking in the language of the vanquished!

He might as well have asked, as in the first year at school, "Tell me the name of His Majesty the Emperor"; or easier still, what my servants had already asked, "Are you married?"

The sentence in French had an abrupt response. His Lordship, fleeing his conqueror, flung toward the bath to express his gratitude to his rescuer, and in the occidental manner made as if to shake Mr. Yamaguchi's hand. I threw myself upon him and held back his arm with all my strength just as he was about to dip a finger in the water. So far he had neither washed nor rinsed. He would therefore have committed an impropriety. The water of the bath is not to wash in, but only to warm yourself, rest and ease the body. You wash first in a tub in the front of the bathroom, and it is only when you are clean that you are permitted the dignity of a plunge in the honorable-bath.

All became quiet now. The two gentlemen got back into the honorable-hot-bath where they lolled

gratefully after the fury of battle. Professor Kamei, like a modest general who returns to cultivate his rice-paddy after saving the Empire, sat down humbly once more on the little bench to be scrubbed again. Instinctively and in order to do him honor, my old masseur scratched him twice as hard. In the silence of the bathroom floated a stream of happiness, of mutual congratulations and of recognition of the honorable-champion of the Empire.

I proposed to His Lordship to bathe him so that he also could enjoy the water of the bath. After drenching him with a ladle I began to lather his back. That is a special honor that I render only my illustrious patrons. His Lordship had come here only with the expectation of getting a bowl of boiled rice. What pride he must have felt, to have the august mistress of the establishment at which he was a guest rub him with soap as conscientiously as if he had been my father!

I was to be sure almost certain to spoil my robe with the soap, and I acted only because I was under the eyes of the honorable-manufacturer who sat with two of his friends in a smiling circle in the honorable-hot-bath. Witnessing thus publicly and

in spite of himself with what infinite attentions I overwhelmed his guest and to what extent I damaged my clothing, he would be obliged of course to give me on his departure an extra cha-dai,\* enough to replace my robe by a new and prettier one.

At this point my servant Hana-San jerked open the door and came in, in great agitation. Her eyes burned and her face showed her excitement; she was hot with haste. Without saluting anyone, without waiting to catch her breath, without looking at His Lordship to whom she spoke, she stammered that inquiry had been made for him at the entrance, by a young gentleman about two years old, a lady and two young women. Learning that he was in the bath, these people had conferred together mysteriously and then vanished.

His Lordship was most excited and told me that these women would be back at once. They must have four rooms, they must be welcomed worthily in his behalf, and told to wait for him. He would go to greet them himself as soon as he was dressed.

This was unusual and even more than that. A

\* A personal gratuity which it is customary to give the hotel-keeper.

young gentleman and three women always occupy the same room. His Lordship did not know that my rooms are big.

On the other gentlemen the effect of this news was startling. In the splashing of water I seemed to feel a wave of uneasy astonishment run across the bath.

As for me, I was filled with just one idea: by her hurry, her bad manners and her impoliteness, Hana-San had violently aroused the scorn of His Lordship. My hotel was disgraced and it was Hana-San's fault. Two pearly tears stood in my eyes, one of shame and the other of rage.

As an earnest of the admonition that I would give her presently and that I would make all the more harsh by my extravagance of politeness, I took steps at once to punish her severely. I denied her the interesting spectacle of these naked gentlemen by ordering her to leave immediately.

A few minutes later we saw Mizu-San,\* my chief servant, come in; she is the oldest of all, she is of age. Mizu-San closed the door softly behind her on its groove, and glanced about the room before taking a step forward. Then according to the

\* Miss Fresh-Water.



best rules of etiquette she went to each one of the gentlemen in turn. Standing before them, her arms crossed over her sash, she bowed low and said in a honeyed voice, "*O jama itashimashita*," \* which is very polite. I was more than satisfied, and, overwhelmed by the preceding emotions, I felt my eyes grow moist with gratitude.

Then after a moment, leaning toward me, she murmured that it would be opportune for me to present myself in the honorable-kitchen. She did not give any reason. It was therefore something important and secret. I must go as quickly as possible.

By her refined behavior Mizu-San had vindicated my hotel. His Lordship must be filled with wonder. In a burst of appreciation and to reward Mizu-San I handed her the soap, asking her to take my place and to busy herself now on the legs, which through my inadvertence were still virgin. My considerate action put her in a position also to earn the price of a new robe. The honorable-manufacturer would pay for it. When they are deserving I never neglect a chance to reward my servants.

In taking leave I stood before His Lordship, crossed my forearms upon my girdle, and bowed

\* "Pardon me for disturbing you" (a most elegant phrase).

low after having pronounced politely the words, "*Dobo, go yukkuri!*" \*

Then I withdrew. It was full time that Mizu-San took my place for I was beginning to feel tired. In order to seize this opportunity to get a robe for nothing I had undertaken a task beyond my strength. This job of covering with soap a surface of perhaps thirty-six square feet was at least twice as much as the usual day's work of a Japanese woman.

I did not see His Lordship get into the bath, but Mizu-San told me about it. The honorable-occidental popped out almost as soon as he went in, not seeming to like it very much. He appeared to be in pain and his skin was red as the fruit of kaki. Mizu-San could not understand it, and no more could I.

Perhaps he was scalded. . . . But I knew long since that foreign gentlemen can stand only tepid water. And so today, in spite of the discomfort that it would give my other patrons, I had given orders to light only half the furnace. When His Lordship got into the honorable-tepid-bath, the temperature could not have been more than 113 °.

\* "If you please, take your time."

With discreet cleverness and in order not to attract attention, Mizu-San had told a trifling lie. It was not in the kitchen that my presence was needed, but in the main entrance hall.

I halted with a shiver. It was an extraordinary spectacle. In the court a young gentleman of eleven stood haughtily. He was dressed in a blue smock covered with inscriptions in white, which gave you to understand that he was the honorable-assistant of the grocer at Fujisawa. In front of him, carefully lined up on the floor of the vestibule, beside the door, lay a number of large colored boxes. Obviously he had just taken them out of a great green wrapper which lay beside him, and his face was scarlet from having carried such a ponderous bundle on the run all the way from the end of the tramway.

At my feet all my servants were kneeling on the floor, burning with wonder and curiosity. They had recognized these mysterious boxes of tinned goods which on every holiday they went to admire in front of the grocery stores.

They would have liked to touch the labels, look at the pictures, pick up the boxes; and I fancy that Hana-San, who has a most lively intelligence,

would have shaken each one at her ear to find out whether it made a noise.

Impossible; the young gentleman raged like a crab and would not let anyone go near his boxes. Myself alone did he allow to kneel down and touch and examine them, on condition that I put them back in place.

With respectful apprehension I took one of the four blue boxes at the end of the line. It was heavy and covered with inscriptions in a foreign language. I asked the young gentleman what it was. He told me in a benevolent tone that it was a prepared food. I thanked him and was about to put the box back when an idea struck me; I had just recognized on the wrapper a bull's head in a white square. It was the meat of one of those extraordinary cows that live in America on a little prairie called Chicago. They try to exterminate them but like fleas in tatami,\* the more you kill, the more others come to take their places. The Americans are disconsolate and don't know what to do next. The carcasses might poison the whole country. Consequently, and in order to pay the expense, they pack the meat of the dead cattle in pretty artistic boxes,

\* Mats which serve as carpets in Japanese houses.

which they try to sell as curiosities. I understand that foreigners even eat the contents.

Next came four red boxes, with a word of Japanese on the labels. These were the famous tinned salmon which is manufactured in Hokkaido, an island to the north of Japan. One of my patrons told me one day that this is not plain salmon, but a secret mixture of crab and devil-fish. It gives a salmon almost as good as the genuine, and it costs much less. They sell it in boxes at a high price and foreigners buy a lot of it. They have hardy stomachs and never suffer cramps. With us it is different; our people observe that the box is of the same red color as that which distinguishes poisonous medicines in the chemists', and accordingly they distrust it. They never eat it, even as purgative.

The young gentleman did not want me to miss anything, for, just as I was putting the box back, he told me to look also at the beautiful white fish that was represented on the bottom.

Next came four boxes of white wood. I raised the lid of the first and recognized the cake which is always served at lunches in the occidental style, offered by societies or municipalities to their guests on the occasion of a commemorative ceremony.

Each takes the cake home with him without cutting it, as a souvenir. What is more, they wouldn't be able to cut it. The cake is indestructible. While the center is only pressed rice, the outside is covered with a white cement, modelled and decorated with little glistening balls. It is very pretty and makes an imperishable souvenir, which moreover does not tempt rats.

Finally, four bottles of Bordo wine made at Tokio. The newspaper told how it is made. A lot of water in which they have pounded up dried kaki and two fine chemicals which give, one the odor, the other the color. It quenches your thirst; it is more healthful and of a much better taste than a wine imitated from ours which the Australians and the French try in vain to sell us.

And there you are. All these magnificent foods which never should have left the grocers' shelves. Why had I been given the honor of touching them? I was suffocating and could hardly draw breath. What use could I make of them? There must be a mistake! They could not be for the hotel!

I was greatly disturbed and on the point of tears. I was sniffing.

Then the young gentleman handed me with



much dignity a calling-card which he had carried all the way from the store rolled up carefully in the hollow of his left fist. The back of the card was turned up and I read these words:

"Before the honorable-foreign-professor I prostrate myself. Fujisawa is lowly and these miserable-objects are all that I could discover to send you as substitute for the honorable-luggage destroyed by my untimely negligence."

I didn't understand at first; it was too short, even almost impolite. On a matter like that I would have written two hundred lines. But on reading it over I was struck dizzy. This foreign professor was none other than His Lordship! All this was for him! All this was for my hotel! All this was for me! What an advertisement! What a sensation in the whole country! How jealous all my neighbors would be!

Wringing my hands I began to sob convulsively for joy. In my ecstasy there was also a tear of esteem for the grocer. What a price he must have been paid to deprive himself thus of what had been the honor of his shop! What an infinite price!

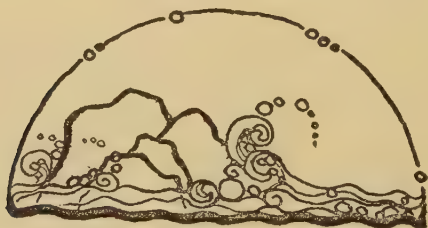
Out of curiosity I read the other side of the card. My heart stopped short and a chill ran down to my



very feet. I trembled. The card was that of His August Excellence the Chief of Police of the village of Fujisawa.

I would never have believed that these gifts came from so lofty a source. In a flash I understood all the displeasure I had caused by not admiring them enough and by weeping before I knew all. Then, imitated instinctively by the six servants who were present, I fell to the ground before the young gentleman and the honorable-boxes of tinned goods. Weeping aloud I threw myself on the ground. I had no strength left to sob, no strength to cry out. Out of my eyes the tears poured, out of my nose, out of my mouth, out of all the pores of my body. It was humility, repentance, understanding, veneration, thanksgiving.

It made a great deal of humidity.





## VI. THE HAT OF TARO-SAN

*Maternal love  
Eternal rustle of wind  
Among the fir trees.*

I WAS very eager to go on this excursion to Enoshima. It would give great pleasure to Taro-San,\* my son, who is two years old.† So Saturday night, when the young lady who is the niece of the honorable-watchmaker came over to my house with her friend Otoku-San, it was no mere curiosity on my part to accept her invitation.

Just imagine, what a famous place Enoshima is!

\* Master Important-Man. Taro is a prænomen reserved for the eldest son.

† One year according to our method of calculation.

I went there once with my class when I was a little girl in school, but I can hardly remember it. The young women did not know this resort and they were even more excited than I to think of going to the famous island. Would their costumes be good enough?

It would be a great honor for Taro-San, to have been to Enoshima. What a sensation in the neighborhood! Because people talk sometimes about it, but very few of them have been there. It is a little peaked island covered with shells, with some most venerable temples. Taro-San is growing up now and he is beginning to remember things that he sees. Probably he will never forget this excursion.

The invitation to make the trip came about in the most wonderful, unimaginable way. The two girls told me about it at length, but as they both kept talking at the same time I couldn't understand all they said. They had been to the Exposition at Ueno. It seems that an enormous Genie flying astraddle a hydroplane dropped a ten-yen note down on them, ordering them to use the money for a pilgrimage to Enoshima. Just like a fairy tale. I couldn't believe it, but they showed me the note; the train time even and the name of the hotel

where they should eat were marked on it. It was fantastic. One suspected that the occidental Prince, gifted with a kind of second sight, had arranged this miraculous adventure in order to honor Taro-San.

How much good it would do Taro-San to breathe the brisk sea breezes! Tokio is on the sea-shore but you never see the water; and in the canals the thick yellow water lies stagnant, covered with the bodies of dead animals. According to what I hear the water at Enoshima is blue and dancing with white waves; it must be a magnificent sight.

Taro-San never goes out of Tokio; it costs too much. When I go downtown shopping or on a visit he is always strapped to my back. But the air of the streets is not good, filled with dust and bad smells.

The Ryogoku quarter is not very wholesome, either; too low and too near the river. There is always the danger of floods. But it costs a lot to live nearer the center of Tokio. My husband is not rich. As there were too many children in his father's honorable-family he left his native town of Echigo, and after his military service he got a job in Tokio with the Mitsubishi Company as a book-keeper.

His salary is only 65 yen a month, but I think that some day he will get a raise.

With 65 yen, nevertheless, you can keep alive, and when the neighbors move in or out we are able to make them suitable gifts in order to keep up appearances. I am very economical. When you are married and are twenty-three years old, it is past time to think of clothes. Food doesn't cost much. I invent little extras that don't cost anything. My husband brought from Echigo a little girl to help with the house; she is only thirteen and we pay her already four yen a month, but she feeds herself. When she came she had a vulgar name. She was called Ine,\* which is very commonplace. I changed it to Chiyo,† which makes a great impression on all the women of the neighborhood.

Our house is not large and it is very close to our neighbors! In addition to the little kitchen and some closets, it consists of two rooms, a chamber of four mats‡ which is occupied by the family and which looks on a little wall with a paling, and a chamber of two mats§ upstairs looking out on

\* Rice-sprout.

† Thousand-generations.

‡ Approximately twelve feet by six.

§ Six feet by six.

the lane. This is occupied by the hired girl, but I spend a lot of time there because Taro-San likes to watch the people go by.

We see the dried-fish man who has his boxes tied to the ends of a bamboo pole, which he carries over his shoulder. He swings along so as to make them click together in a rhythm. It makes a very gay sound.

Then there is the geta-man, who keeps tapping on a little drum to let people know he's coming. And above all there is the pipe-cleaner, who pushes his brazier along on wheels. With the steam he cleans out their little pipes for the old women. There is a small whistle on the kettle which blows gently without ever stopping and sends out a wisp of white steam. This sight always interests Taro-San and frightens him at the same time. But it is good for him to see it; it will prepare him later for the noise of the locomotive and of battle.

What a terrifying responsibility is Taro-San! Every now and then I almost faint, just to think of it. Taro-San is not mine. He belongs to my husband; he is my husband's son. I brought him into the world so that according to our custom he can worship his father after his father is dead. What

an honor it is for me, who am only a woman, to have given him birth! I have the holy trust of watching over his health and his education. It is a noble mission. I can no longer think of anything else. If Taro-San belonged to me instead of to his father I'm not sure that I would feel toward him the same pious fervor. Who knows? Possibly he is the only son that my husband will have. What if he happened to die!

I am very fond of the young lady who is the niece of our neighbor, the honorable-watchmaker. She is always happy and laughing, and every time I see her she has some new gossip of the neighborhood to tell me, but without spitefulness; she is interesting to talk to. Taro-San too is fond of the niece of the honorable-watchmaker, and when she tickles his nose he laughs and tries to catch her ears. A while ago she made him a lovely robe; she is a very considerate girl. Last winter she was at our house the night when it became evident that Taro-San had taken cold. I was very uneasy; he coughed now and then and I thought he had a little fever. She was good enough to stay and help take care of him and we watched him all night long, kneeling



close to the hibachi.\* The next day he was no better and she stayed on. And the day after that, when I sent the hired girl to her house to get some clean clothes, we learned that her honorable-family had begun to worry and had asked the police to look for her in the River Sumida. We had a great laugh over it, even though Taro-San was still a little sick. She had no reason yet to throw herself into the river!

This morning when he left for the office Taro-San's father gave me three yen, telling me that he didn't want any trouble over money to happen on the trip: Enoshima is so far and one goes so rarely. I ought to have refused; it wasn't polite to carry money with me when I went as a guest. But I accepted it, because I thought that it would be nice to buy Taro-San a pretty present for a souvenir. That would honor him, and at the same time it would be a courtesy to my neighbor showing her thus how much I thought of the excursion to which she had invited me.

However, when my husband had gone I reflected on another thing. Taro-San had no hat suitable to

\* A charcoal-burner which serves as stove.

wear to a place like that. Even on the train there would be many women, on such a beautiful day, and Taro-San would be the object of all eyes. His only headgear was a little red bonnet with a yellow ribbon which I had bought him ten days ago. This was not of a lively enough color, or new enough for such a summer sun.

I betook myself at once therefore to the store and picked out a hat with a broad brim, grass green and wound with a gay red ribbon. We tried it on Taro-San. It came down clear to his eyes. So much the better, it would protect him from too much sunlight. Filled with enthusiasm I bought the green hat, in spite of the high price of sixty sen. It was worth it.

As I came out of the shop I considered how much better the green hat would look if it had a feather stuck in the band, and I turned back and bought a wild bird feather which cost only a few sen. I was proud of that economical idea. With just this little addition the hat would be twice as magnificent.

Back home I did not have long to wait for the two girls who came in excited and joyous, glad of the sunshine and the picnic and their bright dresses. It was time to leave without any delay if we did

not want to miss the train. But as was proper I first offered them honorable-tea.

They paid Taro-San an infinity of compliments on his beauty and his clothes. I was more than satisfied. It is true, Taro-San has the cutest little eyes and a square head like his father; his skin has the beautiful yellow tint of an ancient kakemono. His small boyish body is beginning to take shape and when the neighbors come to call on me I always manage to show Taro-San to them naked so that they will be very sure he is a boy. I am forced to take Taro-San every month to the barber where they shave his head while he sits on my knees. He is beginning to have hair, the rascal!

Just as we were leaving the house the girls told me merrily what had happened. My neighbor had spent on her costume all the money the foreign gentleman had given her. I approved of that. It is perfectly natural for a girl to want to look her best, especially when she is trying to do honor to Taro-San.

My neighbor had been somewhat disturbed because she had no more money for the picnic. She could not disclose her trouble to me, who was her guest, nor to her honorable-family to whom she

had already described at length all the wonders of the trip and who would not have given her anything. So she asked Otoku-San to borrow the necessary money at her house. But Otoku-San also had told everything, and as she did not want to tell the name of the friend for whom she did the favor she could get from her grandmother only the sum of two yen.

When the girls met they were greatly embarrassed. Otoku-San offered in addition all her savings. But their money together amounted to no more than three yen; for the excursion it was necessary to have at least nine yen and our hostess had not raised that much. At this moment in their story I offered willingly all I had. The girl declined it. For all that my gift would not have been enough to make up what was lacking.

Then my neighbor remembered that she had an obi that she could dispose of. She would not be able to wear it before the chrysanthemum season and the design did not please her. The obi was like new and had cost, she told us, more than 60 yen. Bargaining with the second-hand dealer she could get ten yen easily.

It would have been more proper for her to have

done her bargaining before coming to my house and without letting me know anything about it. But the girls had been delayed and, in danger of missing the train, had had to call for me first; the honorable-shop of the second-hand man is in the neighborhood of the Manseibashi station, where we had to go. I excused my neighbor for this slight impropriety; the circumstances made it necessary, and then too she is still only a careless young girl.

Before leaving, as a precaution, I borrowed the housemaid's savings: six sen, already something to consider.

We left the lane where Taro-San resides and came out on the avenue where the tramway runs. Near the corner stands the honorable-shop of the watchmaker. He is rich; he and the milkman share a telephone together. And as he sells European products his shop is built in the occidental manner. It has a large window of real glass. When it is light one can see through it quite wonderfully, and when it's dark I can see in it Taro-San on my back as in a mirror. My neighbor is very fortunate to live in so beautiful a shop. I have never gone inside; it frightens me, and I think perhaps I'll be a bother.

However, I am forced to send my maid there every day. My husband takes his watch with him when he leaves for the office, and a little while later I have to find out what time it is, so that I can take care regularly of the needs of Taro-San. Therefore I send the maid. There is a big clock in front of the shop, but that means nothing to her, she can't tell the time. So she goes in to ask and the gentlemen inside are very pleasant. Only she is never very sure just what time they told her and as it is important I have to send her back once or twice. And the time has changed when she goes back, which makes it still more complicated; it is very annoying.

We got on the No. 10 tram. But the large European numbers hung up on the trams are there only for looks. You don't need to bother with them. There are trams bearing the same number which run on three different lines.

This was the right car and the young lady my neighbor proudly took out her purse to buy our tickets from the conductor.\* She was beginning her duties as hostess.

\* Tram tickets in Tokio are sold for the trip and return, and the return is good for any route on any day.



We got off near the Manseibashi station and turned toward the second-hand shop which the young lady my neighbor patronizes. On the way I asked her why she did not go instead to an honorable-pawnbroker from whom later she could redeem her obi. She replied that even if she had liked the obi, she would never be able in the future to wear a garment that had gone through such an adventure. In the fall she would prefer borrowing some more to get a different and new obi; and finally, the honorable-second-hand man would give her more money than the honorable-pawnbroker. I could not but accept such arguments.

But now came a great disappointment. When the second-hand man saw the girls' costumes, and especially when he had been overwhelmed by the hat of Taro-San, he guessed easily that we were going on an excursion and had therefore an extreme need of money. So he would not offer us more than four yen for the obi. My neighbor however was an old customer and we insisted with much warmth. It was to no avail and, in order not to miss our train, we had to take that sum and smile. It was fate! If she had come the day before in her ordinary clothes, or if I had only thought to hide the hat of Taro-



San, she would have got at least eight yen for the obi.

We continued on foot toward the station, seeming to be very gay but really a little regretful inside. My neighbor especially was distressed because now she did not have enough money to entertain us well. I reflected that I was to blame for this, because of the too beautiful hat of Taro-San, and with all my heart I pressed upon her one yen 20, the half of my resources. She would never have agreed to borrow that sum from me, humiliation would have prevented her; but as it was a gift she bowed gratefully.

We arrived at the Mânseibashi station and there was no time to lose. The clock said 9:55. We had to take the electric elevated train which would get us in six or seven minutes to the Tokio Central Station. There we would have to change platforms through the subway and get on the steam train which leaves at 10:20 sharp.

The girls ran toward the window where a woman sells tickets. I stopped before the newsstand. The minute I saw so many things for sale, I knew that among them I could find some valuable article that would serve Taro-San as a toy and

at the same time a decoration. Instinctively my choice settled on a splendid pelican of red celluloid, with round eyes of a bright red color and enormous yellow chaps. He hung on a green ribbon. He was superb! I tried him round Taro-San's neck. I couldn't see, myself, since Taro-San was tied to my back; but the lady at the news-stand told me that with the feather in his hat and this huge pelican which resembled a military decoration, he looked like a General of the Chinese army. I was very proud but I hesitated before the price: 15 sen. If I bought him such a present, so soon and in an unimportant station, what a costly gift, comparatively, I would have to get him in a place like Enoshima! My funds would not permit it.

Then I perceived a ball of red celluloid which could be hung from the neck by a ring of white. It had a feature that would interest Taro-San. Two little pebbles inside made a noise when you shook it close to your ear. It was not so expensive, only nine sen. But the shape was much more common; other little boys would have balls like it.

I was hesitating in this difficult choice when the girls came hurrying up. We would have to run toward the platform, the guard had told them that

the train would arrive in a minute. I confided to them my perplexity. Once more we tried the two ornaments on Taro-San and after some deliberation the girls told me to take the pelican, which looked much better. That was my own feeling, and if I had been alone I would have done it. But I wanted to seem to decide for myself and I declared that I would take the ball because it would be visible from so much farther.

So I paid for it, and we started toward the platform. The guard warned us to run. You could hear above us a rumbling that came to a stop; our train was in the station. We hurried headlong up the stairs, at the risk of turning an ankle on the geta. Unfortunately there was a shriek of the whistle and the rumbling began again. The train was gone. I reflected that surely we would not miss the next one which would leave in six minutes, and letting the girls go on alone I returned to the news-stand where I persuaded the lady to take back the ball and give me the pelican. This bird was certainly much more effective.

When the next train appeared, the clock on the platform said 10:12. That was very close for us to

make connections. But we did not allow that to distress us, for there was nothing we could do about it. Why worry about something that doesn't depend on yourself? You can only look at each other and laugh; and that's what we did.

Also we came very near missing this train. The girls paused on the platform to look at the costume of a lady who got off. It would have been a perfect success except for one detail that made it ridiculous and pitiful. She was carrying an old-fashioned parasol of bamboo and oiled paper. You would not have believed it. It is provincial, it is out of date, and the object doesn't cost enough. A woman would not venture to show herself in Tokio with a thing like that. One must carry a parasol in the European style, bat-wing type, of steel and silk. The more embroideries in open-work it has, the more elegant it is. This lady probably came from the country for the Exposition, she had no experience, and nobody told her how best to spend her money. It would have been more charitable to pity her than smile.

On the train Otoku-San managed to let me know that each ticket had cost 12 sen more than

she had expected. My neighbor must have been distressed without letting it be seen, and I was not sorry for my generosity of a little while earlier.

At the Tokio Central Station we got off and ran through the subway. Unfortunately we came out on the platform just in time to see the train leave without us. Leaning from the window of a coach was an enormous man who made gestures of good-bye to us. That was the second train we had lost in ten minutes! It was very funny and we laughed until we cried.

This piece of bad luck was not serious. We would take the next train which left in fifty-five minutes, at 11:15. Moreover we were glad of this interruption, because it was precisely the time Taro-San needed attention. I could take care of him at leisure. The girls could stroll through the station which is an enormous place and which you don't often have the chance to see. When you walk on geta through the lobby with its flagstone pavement, it echoes from end to end as if you were Her Honor the Empress. It quite startles you at first.

After visiting the rest-room, I sat down in the waiting-room and gave the breast to Taro-San.

The girls opened their parasols and went out

gaily for a walk, to look at the costumes of the ladies who came in, and to peek into the small bazaars that are all around the station. In half an hour they came back, excited and happy. They had seen all sorts of marvellous things of which, as they both talked at once, I understood very little. But I congratulated them only the more. Triumphant my honorable-neighbor brought me a wee fish of mother-of-pearl, hanging by its mouth from a loop of green thread. This trinket you tie to the cord of your obi and it is a good-luck piece. As we were going to visit an island, the fish would be quite suitable and would serve as a badge. She had bought three, although quite ashamed of the price—only five sen; and the girls had already put theirs proudly in place. They were enchanted.

To be sure this idea was excellent, but it was inconceivable that my neighbor had brought nothing back for Taro-San. It was more than an impropriety and I was much put out about it. In politeness however I gave no sign of my feelings, and laughing very loud I tied my fish to the feather on the hat of Taro-San.

Since someone had just given him a present, I found it my duty to offer him a better one. In the



news-lady's tray I found a blade of wheat made of twisted paper, and a number of tiny things were hanging from the tip of it by green threads. There was a small cardboard sword, a die also of cardboard, a little paper drum, some little red balls and some balls of crystal. And there was a cardboard medal on which were printed in red the two characters which, written separately, are pronounced *Tom*i \* and *Tattos*hi.† When they are written this way one under the other, their meaning does not change, as it might, but the combination must be read *Fuk*i.‡ That is shorter and sounds better. Only you have to learn it at school. All the words in the language are like that, which increases the respect people must have for the honorable-persons who know how to read. Myself, I know how to read a little.

The blade of wheat and each of the objects hanging from it brings good luck by itself. It would be impossible to say how much good luck the whole combination would bring. I fixed the blade in the band of Taro-San's hat, on the side opposite the feather. It made the hat more beautiful still, and I

\* Wealth.

† Nobility.

‡ Wealth and nobility.



was proud of Taro-San. He had now the haughty presence of a Marshal of the Chinese Army. He was covered with good-luck pieces and he laughed. That was the best possible omen for the day.

We went up to the platform to take our places in the train. Very quickly we ran from car to car, crying and making signs to each other. It always frightens me to go by a second-class compartment. The velvet of the benches is so blue, and then too the only people who use one are the nobility, or the *narikin*,\* or foreign gentlemen who for their part are always born millionaires. How do they manage it?

Suppose we had taken a second-class carriage. After glancing covertly at the faces of the gentlemen, we would have passed two pleasant minutes admiring the prettiness of the young ladies. Then five minutes of dismay examining their costumes. Alas, we would have been forced to admit that they had clothes newer and more brilliant than ours, and above all their little boys would have had pelicans bigger than Taro-San's. All the rest of the trip we would have had no more happiness. Women are never jealous of the beauty of others, because

\* The newly rich.

your own personal beauty is what it is. You can hardly add anything to it. As for costume and pelican, it is a different matter. So even had we had money enough we would not have taken a second-class carriage.

The chief pleasure in travelling on the railroad is to have many women in the car and to make friends with them. You like to have them pretty, too, but not so well dressed as you. So it is hard to find the most suitable coach.

In a railway carriage or a tram car, it is proper that children be seated first, then gentlemen, and last of all ladies if there is any room left. Once seated a lady doesn't get up unless the gentleman who comes in is of her family. At present, in general, he will decline her seat; and sometimes even a young student will offer his seat to a woman. In this way they seek to imitate the ridiculous customs of the Occident. I don't like it. That is how good manners are lost.

Somebody always offers a seat to a woman who is carrying a baby on her back. She unties him, puts him behind her, and sits down on the edge of the bench. The gentlemen on each side of her are

obliged to move over enough so that the little boy will have room to play.

But never do you give your seat to an old woman, because she can get along by herself. Craftily she turns around and as soon as she sees the least little space, into it she drops like a flash of lightning, between two gentlemen. As she is lean and peaked she can bore about her easily from behind, and in a minute she is the most comfortable.

There were not many people in the carriages because most of the honorable-travellers had gone to the country on the earlier trains. Unfortunately therefore we had plenty of room to sit down. If the carriage had been filled the girls would have had to stand, which is less comfortable, but they would have had more fun with the people. Dear me! you don't ride on the train every day, and what do you care if you do get tired!

Suddenly the train started and it was some minutes before we could catch our breath. From the moment we left the house, we had already had many joyous thrills, but the magnificent part of the excursion had only now begun. Every jolt of the train filled us with delight. The sun was superb.

And we carried on us so many omens of good luck!

Leaving the girls to look out the window, I joined conversation with an honorable-family which had seemed especially interested in the hat of Taro-San. There were the grandmother, the mother and two little girls; and they were to get off at Totsuka. On board the train this family was of a humbler grade than we, since they had not brought a little boy with them, and since they would get off two stations earlier. Politely, I did not even hint what a distance separated us.

We spoke first naturally of Taro-San, and then next of that which is bothering all women these days: the high cost of living. Alas! red-bean paste went up again last month.

I know what this high cost of living is. Because of his work my husband has to have two sets of clothes, an occidental outfit and a Japanese. This doubles the expense, but it is necessary. Since the office is an occidental establishment you have to dress in the occidental fashion in order to work there. And my husband does not like these foreign clothes. With what relief he takes them off when he gets home! The collar and the sleeves are so tight. In particular he can't stand the shoes. This

aversion came to him in the army. On the distribution of shoes he received two for the same foot, and he did not dare tell the honorable-officer his mistake lest he get himself punished. An honorable-subaltern doesn't like to make mistakes. So it happened that at length my husband became disgusted with shoes.

At the same time they are so inconvenient to take care of. A year or two ago I put them to wash with the geta in a basin of warm water. They sank to the bottom and the water soaked them through all the better. But then, impossible to get them dry. In vain I put them on the very embers in the stove, they scorched and smelled and that was all. And by reason of going out with wet shoes, my husband caught bronchitis. It even seems that they shrank and gave him pain, as well. So this winter, in spite of the bad weather we had, I prohibited the maid to touch them, and in spring they had the mud on them still of New Year's. It was very ugly to see.

With the ladies we talked also of the trouble you have nowadays in Tokio to properly furnish your garden. Everything is so dear. And we discussed the relative advantages of little rocks and dwarf trees.

I gave my opinion. I am in favor of rocks. I can speak on this point; the garden of my house is decorated with a little rock placed on the ground and a dwarf maple tree planted in a flat flower-pot. My husband however prefers his tree to his rock. He finds it more distracting. But although the maple tree is beginning to wither, I am not going to replace it. Rather, I will buy another rock. A rock is more effective, and it is above all more robust and will stand harder usage. Whenever you move, if you take care to wrap it up in a cover, it will last a very long time; it is necessary to cover it also in a frost, for fear it should split. These are the only precautions you need to take.

My husband would not want anyone to touch this rock. He would be interested to see moss growing on it little by little. But I have charge of his household and I watch to see that everything is kept clean and tidy. Every morning the rock is brushed off by the maid, and twice a week she scrubs it with the powder which serves also to scour the pans. Evidently this cleansing misshapes and wears it down a little. But the rock is becoming much brighter.

We found ourselves in agreement in approving the excellent measures taken by the Honorable-Government to cut down the cost of living. It has already spent more than 50,000 yen to put in all the trams a pretty poster in colors, which announces the setting aside every month of two National Economy Days. The poster explains in detail how you must observe those two days if you want to please His Majesty the Emperor. You must not offer honorable-tea to the women that come to call, and you must not give tips to tradesmen. And I must not go to the train that day with friends who are leaving on a journey, so as to save the price of the platform-ticket. How many expenses you avoid, and how the cost of living is reduced! I am very pleased with this ingenious scheme of the Government. With the money saved, I bought every month for the hat of Taro-San at least two additional feathers which thus cost me nothing.

The train stopped in the Yokohama station and the peddlers cried their wares along the platform. We were a little hungry and my neighbor bought each of us a box of sushi.\* After long hesitation

\* A sort of rice-sandwich.



she chose for herself vanilla ice-cream in a waffle cone.

Very soon the young girl finished her ice-cream and she looked at our rice with some interest. Otoku-San guessed that her friend had not had time to eat this morning. That happens often to girls who are going on a picnic. Their toilet takes them so long that they can't take time for breakfast. And even then sometimes a girl is late.

It was true. But I asked the young girl why she hadn't bought herself also a box of sushi, which is less liquid and more nourishing than the vanilla ice-cream.

The niece of the honorable-watchmaker told me not to be uneasy. She explained: "I never have any appetite at all when I am going to the country. My mind is too preoccupied and too gay. Especially today, when I am hostess. That's why I took the vanilla ice-cream. I love it to death, and I never let myself buy it except on holidays." And since the ice-cream cost only ten sen, half as much as the sushi, the girl probably wanted also to be economical.

The women beside us, who had become quite familiar by now, made bold to compliment Taro-

San openly on his hat and the girls on their costumes. The coach had been well selected. Of all the little boys it was Taro-San who had the most elaborate head-dress, and it was the two girls who had the brightest costumes. Taro-San made no reply to the compliments, but the young lady my neighbor bowed timidly, thanking the other ladies; then, drawing a fan from her sash, she opened it with a swift movement of her hand and hid her face behind it. She had well chosen her moment; everyone looked at her and there was a general stir of excitement. She had one of the black Chinese fans that the geisha-girls are carrying this year. The newspapers speak of them sometimes but none of us had yet seen one. With courtesy and simple charm she had already loaned the fan and it was passing from hand to hand to the admiration of all; and she was explaining to the more curious in what shop in Tokio you could buy them and how they should be selected. What a triumph! She was transported with happiness. In making ready for the outing she had perhaps had momentary disappointments that I didn't know about, and she would have still others. But such a moment of delight paid her for everything.

I was full of joy, for the honor was reflected upon us. We became the Empresses of the coach and Taro-San became no more nor less than His Majesty the Little Emperor of China.

After nursing him, I held Taro-San at the window while he did his little duty, and then I let the two little girls play with him for a minute before I dressed him. That was amusing to me but not to Taro-San, who began to cry. So I told the little girls that when Taro-San was bigger and if he liked, I would let them play together in a more satisfactory fashion. A simple joke to be sure, but very merrily received. The little girls did not understand, they were too young. But we women burst out laughing and the mother and the grandmother in particular. We held our hands close over our mouths, as was proper. We simply could not stop. Just looking at each other, or at Taro-San and the two little girls, sent us off again. When the ladies got off at Totsuka and we called good-bye from the window, all our noses were moist and our eyes filled with tears of delight.

Soon after we stopped at Ofuna. Other peddlers were calling along the platform. I felt that I ought to offer something to these girls, in recog-

nition of their costumes and their fan. I had three vanilla ice-creams served and we licked them gazing at each other happily. I gave a little of mine to Taro-San, but he cried.

The train started again; that filled us with excitement but we did not let it be seen. Up to now we had not had a thought in the world, but the next station would be Fujisawa. We were approaching the region of Enoshima. Naturally the landscape became much prettier. It was not so grand as the spectacle of the smoking factory chimneys before Yokohama, but in a different way it was very picturesque also.

The country was covered with rice-paddies green as the hat of Taro-San. It was checkered with them as far as the eye could reach. In some of them naked farmer-men were at work and only the tops of their bodies stood above the water. Here and there reared up little rocky hills, all woolly with blue-black shrubbery that seemed impenetrable. How big the butterflies must be out there! They say they darken the air when they fly. We tried to distinguish Mount Fuji in order to make our prayer to it, but we did not know in what direction we must look. It was prob-

ably concealed by the smoke of the locomotive.

We were thrilled when finally the train drew up. It was Fujisawa. This poetic name\* was traced on every wall of the station. What a beautiful hand the station-master must write! We hurried to get off. The engineer might start the train without warning.

The station was large and new and clean. All the employees seemed to be so busy. If Taro-San had been the little boy of a military gentleman or of a nobleman, the station-master would have come out of his white office and shown him everything very ceremoniously; but none of these men paid any attention to us. So much the better. We would have been so frightened.

Civilly our hostess deposited her tickets with the guard and he returned to her half of each. She was proud. This was the first time she had ever had charge of so many and such costly tickets all at once.

Several honorable-families were already stringing out along the road to Enoshima. We might have followed them. Going on foot, we might have made our pleasure last longer and spared our emotions.

\* Fujisawa signifies "The Pool of the Soy-Beans."

But our hostess wished to take us by tram, which costs money and is more distinguished. Then, too, the hat of Taro-San did not permit us to make the trip on foot; we would have dishonored it.

Was this tram in front of us the right one? In order to make sure my neighbor went to ask information from the guard at the station, the sergeant of police, a little girl, a traveller and finally the man at the ticket-window in the tramway station. Except for the little girl, who did not know, all their advice concurred. It must be the right car. Furthermore this indication was written in enormous letters above the ticket-window.

My neighbor was happy because the return ticket cost 22 sen. What a price! But the street-car was lacquered yellow and did not show a single scratch. It was smoother even than the rock in my garden.

We began to be quite nervous. We were approaching the famous isle. Perhaps we would catch a sudden glimpse of it without warning. That would be too much and would take away our breath. Every time the tram came to a halt, in spite of the advice of the conductor we would jump off on the road to see what the sign said. It would not



be Katase and we would push each other back on board.

Finally it was Katase . . . just at the moment when, tired out, we had decided not to get off. An honorable stopping-place, a real little station.

We found ourselves in the street of Katase. On each side was a line of restaurants and especially of shops where marvellous things were displayed: thousands of postal cards for sale tapestried the walls, cotton napkins that bore in blue the picture of the island, and what quantities of shells! Not those common shells that you find at the seashore, but plaster shells in extraordinary shapes and painted all colors, blue, green, red. Much more curious than the shells you can pick up on the sand.

We were much interested but we did not stoop to look at them. We represented the quarter of Ryogoku and we were on a pilgrimage to Enoshima, and not to Katase, which is only a suburb of it. We had to be dignified.

From the gate of the station there had been a great play of sunshades. Under our bright parasols opened out in the sun we walked with little steps, three abreast in the middle of the road,



keeping our distance from the other families and without turning our heads.

At the threshold of their shops the lady merchants graciously invited us to come in. We greeted them genteelly and continued on our way. Suddenly we uttered all three at once a cry of astonishment, and quite losing our dignity we began to run. Before us was the beach and in the background the ocean. The sea, the green and briny and gleaming sea, that spread shining away farther than eye could reach! On the other side of the bay the coast unfolded, yellow and blue. And at the left, at the end of its long slender bridge, lifted the verdant cone of mysterious Enoshima!

On all sides of us on the beach whole families took off their clothes and, even more naked than a while ago in the train, with bursts of laughter, floundered into the sea.

The girls undid their stockings and lifted their kimonos, drawing the corners through their sashes. Shaded beneath their umbrellas and carrying their geta in their left hands, they waded a little way into the water. What a cool tingling of feet and ankles, how very delicious! They urged me to come

in and enjoy it. But I could not. What if I had slipped and if Taro-San had been drowned or been pinched by a crab! . . . But I showed him how to let the sand slip through his fingers. That game amused him. Then also I made him dip his little finger in the water, and he sucked it. He cried at first, but, dancing rock-a-bye from one foot to the other, I quickly soothed him. Thus he learned that the water in the sea is salty. An instructive lesson in natural facts—his honorable-father will appreciate that.

The girls would have been glad to take a real swim, or at least go in up to the waist, but they were almost sorry they had put on such pretty dresses. But we could not think of it. The island awaited us with other pleasures greater still, and the thought of it reconciled us to renounce this one.

At the shed on the footbridge they asked us six sen each to cross it. Why six sen? A lady told me in Tokio that the toll was two sen. They tripled the price on us! These men at the bridge were like the honorable-second-hand man this morning, they saw the hat of Taro-San, and the hat of Taro-San was too beautiful.

Going out on the bridge I was uneasy. It seemed so wavering and so fragile. If it broke under my weight, what would become of Taro-San? Happily we came to a place where the structure seemed quite new and I was reassured: the Government then was closely watching its upkeep. At this point a number of honorable-persons were staring over the water. We stopped a moment to look also. The water was of a fearful green and surely had hypnotized them.

A minute later we were on the island of Enoshima and translated into a fairy world. On the stones our geta seemed to make a more singing noise, and our parasols were even more dazzling in the sunlight. The island deserved its fame; it was even more magnificent than a woman of the neighborhood, in Tokio, had described it to me. Imagine a long street rising almost perpendicularly and along each side marvellous shops showing an endless variety of objects carved in shells. We thought no longer of our fine appearance; we hurried breathless from shop to shop, crying out with joy at each new discovery and calling each other to tell of our findings. I discovered a little locomotive in mother-of-pearl which would have de-

lighted Taro-San. It would be a fitting souvenir for him. I went in and politely asked the price: 50 yen. I counted my money, I had 70 sen left. I couldn't dream of it. With the hope of helping me the young lady my neighbor also counted her money: she found one yen 40 sen. Putting it with mine, we still would have had too little by far. Furthermore Otoku-San asked her modestly to loan her 80 sen—she needed it for presents. She had promised to bring back home with her so many beautiful presents.

Fifty yen! The price itself thrilled us and made me want the locomotive all the more. What could there be so rare about it? Perhaps the piece was of genuine mother-of-pearl. And then, too, perhaps all these merchant-gentlemen did not want to sell; their windows were too beautiful, just like a museum. Perhaps they made known a purchase price only so that you would be more struck with admiration.

Continuing thus up the street we were confronted suddenly by an enormous portal, on each of the pillars of which there was written vertically in three great black characters the name "Umematsuya."

We had completely forgotten this matter of the hotel and it may be easily understood that this sight came as a surprise and a disappointment. It was our duty not to keep waiting any longer the honorable-Lord who was expecting us there; and yet we had not seen the rest of the island, the temples and the grottoes which perhaps were even more beautiful than those we had already visited! How unlucky!

But we had no choice. Concealing with a smile our trepidation we went into the courtyard of the inn. The building was magnificent; it was an honor even to the island, which is the greatest praise you could give. We stopped at the door of the imposing foyer. Otoku-San gave me a wink. On the floor, in the middle of a number of others, was a pair of enormous white shoes. We would have to give up all hope of seeing the top of the island, the honorable-Lord was there. And these were terrifying shoes; I had never yet seen any so large except the sacred zori \* which hang at the door of the temple of Asakusa; they are six feet long.

Some maid-servants ran up and my neighbor asked them most genteelly if an Occidental Lord

\* Straw sandals.

was stopping there. Having rested thoughtlessly against a pillar, I jerked my hand away as if I had been burned. It was of a rare wood and smoother even than the pillars of the temple at Meiji. Never, even at Ryogoku, which is a part of the capital, Tokio, never have I put my hand on such a hotel. And there on the ground, some steps away, was a rock perhaps six times as large as ours.

The maid-servants replied courteously that the honorable-Lord was a magnificent man. He was at present in the honorable-hot-bath with some of his friends. But he would come out of it surely before the end of the afternoon.

We withdrew a little to deliberate in a less embarrassing position. Other maid-servants kept coming up every minute and begged us graciously to enter.

We agreed that for the time being we ought not to disturb His honorable-Lordship. This decision gave us time to explore the rest of the island and especially it postponed our entrance into the hotel. We could prepare ourselves better for this notable event.

So we opened our parasols, and without going back to them we made a low bow to the maid-

servants, and then we were off, our spirits somewhat revived.

Some score yards the street led on, and then there was a steep high stairway of sandstone, shadowed by lofty cedars, going up to the temples which as usual were situated in a high place. At the first landing of the stairway we turned back to look at the view. It was thrilling and we clapped our hands, pointing out to each other the foot-bridge yellow and slender as a thread laid zig-zag across the water, and the beach where a little while ago we had had such a pleasant bath. Beneath us the island, with its little houses of wood which dropped down in huddle and cluster; and then the ocean, the blue ridge of hills, the luminous sky, the cool enfolding wind—all things to enchant us! Never had Taro-San seen such a landscape; what a joy for him! A gentleman was taking a photograph of it and I would have been so glad to have him include Taro-San in the picture, but I didn't dare ask. His camera was too small. How, even then, could he have got into it a landscape so broad and so beautiful?

We went on up, discussing all we had seen. The hotel we quite forgot. At last we came to the



temples, which are very sacred. I was astonished nevertheless for they looked less new and fine than the hotel. That should not be. From the top the view is still more beautiful, but it is always the same. It even becomes too vast a spectacle, one can no longer distinguish the little details which lend interest to a landscape.

We each of us put two sen in the box at the entrance to the temple, and then we pulled the bell to call the attention of Heaven to our pious deed. Bowing before the sanctuary we prayed for a moment. For my part I asked of the Goddess Benten \* a long and prosperous life for Taro-San, and in behalf of Taro-San I asked the same grace for His Majesty the Emperor.

In a cottage at the right of the entrance-court there was a venerable-priest who sells blessed objects and postal cards. For Taro-San I bought a bit of blessed wood wrapped in a sheet of paper on which is marked the name of the temple. It brings good luck. And inasmuch as the head of the pelican had been knocked off in one of our dismountings from the tram, I slipped the relic inside the rosy bird. It was perfect.

\* The Goddess of Fortune, worshipped at Enoshima.

It was time for Otoku-San to decide upon her gifts. Carefully she inspected the postal cards. These represent solely views of the temple and they are not even in color. But without extra price the venerable-priest will mark them with a rubber stamp which bears in the middle the date and above the name of the temple. That certifies to your pilgrimage and makes a beautiful souvenir.

Otoku-San put back the postal cards with the respect that one owes to sacred things, but she did not buy any. We went on. You follow a terrace where you find many temples, dappled all over with the small placards put up by the pious in memory of their pilgrimages. The panorama is always so beautiful. Then you set out on a long avenue which rises at first, then descends little by little to the other coast of the island, toward the temples and the famous sacred grottoes. It is lined once more with small restaurants and shops. We were warm after climbing so far and somewhat tired. The young lady our hostess suggested that we rest on the mat spread beneath the pennants at the entrance to a restaurant, and she ordered a cup of grated ice for each of us. I am very fond of grated ice. It is so cold that you think you have swallowed

a bit of burning charcoal. The burn of it takes away your breath. It must be very good for the stomach. There is a refreshment that is wholesome and that is not flat like vanilla ice-cream and other sweets. It has no smell at all.

So, kneeling on the mat, we fanned ourselves in the cool shadow and let ourselves be stared at by the ladies who were passing by. We made a fine appearance, for some of them turned around to look again. But why did they not look more at Taro-San? Perhaps he was not prominent enough. I had taken off his hat, but he was still wearing his dress which is elegant and, above all, new. To show this I had left the basting-threads in it—the girls too had left these threads hanging down from their kimonos: they come out all too quickly when in use.

We resumed our walk. The road was descending now, and we found it pleasanter going. The shops were very tempting but we decided not to buy anything for the present. First we felt obliged to find the best shop. Then coming back from the famous sacred grottoes we would stop in at it.

Some distance farther the road stopped at a steep stairway that went down steeply to the very

base of the cliff. The spectacle was gigantic and awe-inspiring. Before us rolled the majestic ocean, reaching away to foreign shores. We walked along salty rocks which exhaled a succulent fragrance of sea-weed.\* Between the rocks and even below them the sea boiled frothing and dark, with a sonorous sound. Our eyes were blinded by the wind which filled us with joy. I was afraid for the hat of Taro-San, but the elastic cord was holding it safely.

Gentlemen and ladies were having their pictures taken on postal cards, standing on the largest rock. I would have liked to have ours taken but it was five yen—a treat reserved for millionaires.

Just for fun the girls pretended they were going to throw themselves into the sea. But before they got near it they would be frightened. They laughed merrily. A man who was standing near told them jokingly that if they wanted to drown themselves there was another place almost as suitable, at the end of the beach of Katase, over toward Kamakura. At that place there is no way to climb out again, either. The spot is somewhat less celebrated and less popular, but it is convenient for thrifty girls

\* Sea-weed is one of the chief Japanese foods.

as they do not have to pay the price of admission to the island. To spend six sen in order to drown yourself is rather extravagant!

What a clever and comical remark! We all laughed long with the gentleman. And we thanked him for his good advice, and then we went on toward the celebrated grottoes which are close by.

We had to pay five sen apiece to get in. The grotto is like a small railway tunnel, but on the bottom instead of rails there is a trickle of water. You go through it on a footbridge, and the walls are papered with little placards posted by visitors in commemoration of their pilgrimage. At the very end there is a tiny illuminated temple, with honorable-priests who also sell postal cards. Otoku-San examined them all reverently, but she bought not one. She must have made up her mind.

Carrying tapers in our hands we entered a black hole which was a prolongation of the grotto. It was very narrow, but there was nothing to be afraid of: with this dim light it was very much like the lane in Tokio that we live on, on a winter night. The floor was even more wet. The girls called to the echoes but they did not choose to reply. The passage became narrower and the ceiling

lower. I worried about Taro-San; he might get his hat dirty, or at least bump his head. We would soon come, I expected, to another gate where perhaps we would have to pay again. Not at all; we came to the center of the earth and there we found ourselves before a wall. It was the deepest part of the grotto and consequently the holiest spot on the island. We paused a moment to collect ourselves and to pray, in our own names and in behalf of our women-relatives and friends.

And so the first part of the picnic was finished. We had seen Enoshima and the memory of it would be glorious and eternal. It was necessary now for us to think of presents. The thought absorbed us completely and made us walk fast. The selection would be important and difficult, but thrilling. The better to plan, we each counted our money. The young lady our hostess was the poorest; she had only fifteen sen remaining. And it was she who should have had most money in order to offer her guests a nice souvenir! But if she needed it, one of us two could lend her a little.

We went into one of the first shops on the road. It was not the one we had decided on when we went by; but we were so eager to buy! The build-



ing was certainly an older one, but the shelves of this shop displayed a more beautiful assortment: that was some compensation.

To Otoku-San we left first choice, without trying to influence her. To her little brothers naturally she ought to take a Tanuki, which is the bringer of good luck to boys. It is a sacred badger, a secondary divinity in the mythology, who has had many joyous adventures. He is represented often in a barouche drawn by rats. But the effigy of him standing on his hind legs is venerated above all. On his head is a large flat hat; in his left paw he carries a lamp hanging from a bamboo rod; and in his right paw a scroll of paper or a bottle of sake. With hat and lamp of cardboard of a decent weight, the model in plush cost thirty sen. She bought one.

Next Otoku-San had to choose for her sisters. Here also was the good-luck piece for girls. It is a little group in colored porcelain. A half-naked woman is stretched out, about to give birth. At her side is kneeling the midwife, who lays her little finger on the woman's navel and seems to say, "Dear me, but how large you are; it will be twin boys!" And the woman is very happy.



Unfortunately the good-luck piece cost 65 sen. Furthermore Otoku-San's grandmother was too old, and her unmarried sisters were so young that it would not interest them. Her married sisters were of course no longer in the family and she would not have to take them anything. So Otoku-San rejected this gift. She chose instead a small cardboard box containing a number of plaster shells no larger than grains of rice. There were four kinds—red, green, yellow, and blue. The yellow were the most beautiful. You looked at them through a cover of real glass, divided in four by two strips of blue paper. It was very effective. And then, as there were so many shells, each of her sisters could have a little collection of them.

For her grandmother and her mother, Otoku-San looked for some postal cards. They were all in black and white. But finally she found two cards that bore photographs of geisha-girls of the island—pretty things and sweetly dressed. They were smiling, in three colors.

Otoku-San did not spend all her money; and I surmised that she wanted to buy for herself a napkin with a picture of the island, such as we had seen on our way up at Katase. You twist the nap-

kin around your head when you dust off the floor of the house with a feather-broom in the morning; it makes a very elegant coiffure.

The young lady my neighbor lingered a long time covetously over the hair-pins, one of them in the shape of a sea-gull. Even if she had had enough money to buy it, she had no room left in her hair for another pin. She selected three copies of the same postal cards. You couldn't see Mount Fuji, but it was a picture of the entrance to the island, and in front of a pretty shop you could make out the very spot where we must have stopped. The cards cost two sen each. My hostess asked also for two stamps, and she wrote forthwith an enthusiastic postal card to her father in Korea and another to her grandmother at Kozu. The third card she would take back to her aunt at Tokio. Thus she had six sen left. With this money she told us she would get us each a postal card and sign it herself as a souvenir; but she wanted to look farther to see if she could find some more effective ones at the same price.

For my part without a moment's hesitation I bought for Taro-San a Tanuki like Otoku-San's, and I tied it around his neck. This Tanuki had in

his hat a feather of the same color as Taro-San's; what a coincidence! The red pelican was getting cumbersome, and as its head was already quite smashed I gave it to a little boy who was watching us. He thanked me, and ran away.

I had saved some money because I could not get the mother-of-pearl locomotive out of my mind. A locomotive, that's a manly thing! Who knows? Perhaps, bargaining for it. . . . If the merchant would let me have just one wheel I would be happy.

We turned back up the long street toward the temples, and above all toward the fine hotel where Taro-San was to rest. The heat had lessened somewhat, but you could not help being tired just the same. Ten minutes later, as I gazed at the Tanuki which Otoku-San carried hanging from a little bamboo rod, I burst into laughter; and the young lady my neighbor joined me. Otoku-San's Tanuki was a pathetic abortion!

Since the Tanuki is he who brings good luck to little boys, he is of the masculine sex, and must be well formed. How naïve girls are, I thought! Carelessly they buy, innocently they accept whatever the shop-keeper hands them—which is always the worst of the lot. Otoku-San's Tanuki was im-

perfect!—and she gazed at it now with an air of dismay. So far as I was concerned, I had taken pains. For Taro-San I had examined all the Tanuki and selected surely the finest.

Otoku-San looked at us, blushing and shame-faced. Her sisters would make fun of her. Her grandmother especially would joke with her gently, telling her that she was not yet ready to marry, since she was unable to recognize a good husband. Otoku-San wanted to go back to the honorable-shop and exchange her Tanuki. But it was too late, and now the only pleasure to anticipate was the fine hotel. To make Taro-San wait would be to tire him needlessly.

In a moment of generosity I offered to trade with her, and I hung Otoku-San's Tanuki around the neck of Taro-San in place of his. For Taro-San it would not have the same importance, he was too young to understand. And my husband would excuse me when he knew the reason.

This restored to Otoku-San all her gaiety. She thanked me modestly, and then the two girls went on ahead together gossiping and laughing. I could hardly keep up with them.

Reaching the high temple, they went over to

the honorable-priest who was kneeling behind his table. Otoku-San had her plan. After a long bow she humbly begged the honorable-priest to be good enough to have the kindness to stamp with his rubber stencil the two postal cards which she handed him; they were the photographs of the two geisha-girls.

To our astonishment the priest flatly refused. He was not obliging. Otoku-San was heart-broken. If the postal cards were not stamped they would have no value; for she could buy the same cards at Tokio, just in front of the house of her honorable-father, and for one sen less. She suggested going all the way back to the famous sacred grotto where the priest would be perhaps more compliant; but that was out of the question. Persuaded at last by our supplications, the priest benevolently stamped the two cards. But we had to give ten sen to Our Lady the Goddess. Ten sen for two prints of the stamp! I'm sure that if Our Lady the Goddess herself had spoken, she would have understood us better and would not have asked more than two sen as alms.

At last it was done. The day had been full of pleasure, our gifts were beautiful and well se-

lected, we were satisfied with ourselves. The two girls went down the stairway before me, very merry and making their geta clack on the stone steps. They turned to see if I was coming.

Then we discovered the frightful catastrophe which, unknown to me, had been loosed upon us a moment ago. The young lady my neighbor seemed startled; indeed she ran up a couple of steps to look more closely at Taro-San, who was tied on my back; and she told me quietly that his hat was gone.

No hat! His green hat had vanished! That chill idea went shuddering down my back. It was necessary to recover the hat at once, and, laughing in my rage, I hurried back up the stairway, followed by the two girls. They were good-for-nothings, not to have noticed the accident sooner! Why had they gone on ahead of me instead of staying behind? We asked the honorable-priest for information, and he told us that just a little while ago he had seen Taro-San even then without a hat. He did not seem to think it was a very important matter. He actually seemed to regard Taro-San as someone of no account!

We were all ready to run back even as far as



the sacred grotto, questioning every one we met, when a little girl who overheard us said that at the very moment we were talking with the priest she had seen a woman go by carrying on her back a little boy with a green hat. The woman had hurried down the stone stairway. The green hat had impressed the little girl because of its beauty; on one side it had a red feather with a fish and on the other a broken blade of wheat from which hung a cluster of small shining objects. It was the hat of Taro-San. It fell off behind us, it was too beautiful and in place of returning it the woman had kept it for her boy. And now, fleeing with her treasure, milady the thief was running at full speed down the road to Fujisawa. No way to catch her; the hat was utterly lost.

My hands trembled and my lips grew tense with rage. In a flash I foresaw the dismal return we would make, the whole series of humiliations which would compel us to hang our heads and go as fast as we could.

In the first place we must give up all thought of stopping at the hotel, where Taro-San and ourselves by contrast would be the laughing stock of the well-dressed maids. Then, the shop-ladies of the



street in Katase who on our arrival had watched us go by, so proud and dignified . . . But above all I dreaded the tram-car and the train. The lady-passengers who would stare at us so closely and without saying a word—provided that we did not meet again some of the ladies who, on the trip out, had become acquainted with us and who would offer politely their condolences over our unhappy downfall. We could do nothing but get off the train on the way and enter Tokio on foot during the night.

Easily I could see who was to blame for our misfortune. It was I. I had offended Our Lady the Goddess in not leaving an offering when I invoked her before the sanctuary in behalf of Taro-San. A young gentleman so well dressed and so stingy, he should be punished! Then I offended her a second time when I gave to an unknown little boy the pelican containing the blessed bit of wood which up to that time had deferred our punishment.

So I went back to the temple and tossed four sen in the box, two sen that were due from Taro-San, and two from myself, for a new prayer which I addressed to the Goddess, ringing the bell very loudly. The green hat was lost beyond recovery,

but perhaps that would be punishment enough.

Taro-San now had no hat and it was necessary to get him another at once. Otoku-San hesitatingly took from the sleeve of her kimono a little occidental handkerchief of embroidered linen and offered it to me. It could be knotted around his head like a bonnet. Furiously I refused it. Of course it would protect him from the wind, and he need not fear the sun because he was sheltered beneath my umbrella. But it was a feminine, a ridiculous head-dress! Everybody would take Taro-San for a little girl!

Happening to glance at Otoku-San's Tanuki, it occurred to me that in reality Otoku-San was the direct cause of the disaster. In reaching to tie on the Tanuki, as she is not very tall, she clumsily had displaced the elastic cord which held on the hat of Taro-San. Then like a fool she went on ahead!—and I remembered how I had staggered along as fast as I could to keep up with them. And in my haste the hat was jolted off and Taro-San, fast asleep, said nothing. . . . There's the whole story.

I was filled with anger at this stupid girl who, by her carelessness, had brought about our present unhappiness. Now Taro-San had not one good-

luck piece on him: that little freak Tanuki would not defend him from some possible new misfortune. So, politely but firmly, I insisted that Otokusan trade back the Tanuki.

I decided to buy at once a new hat for Taro-San. In a place like Enoshima you ought to be able to get admirable hats. The girls offered me all the money they had left. That gave me 52 sen altogether, with which I should be able to get something suitable.

We went down into the town and looked in all the shops. On all sides they offered us sea-shells and nowhere was there a hat for sale. In the island of Enoshima they don't sell hats for little boys. We got more and more breathless and uneasy. Fortunately, at the very end of the street, a lady found four small hats in the back of her shop. I uttered a cry of joy and seized one of them in a fever of excitement. It was a little red hood with a yellow ribbon, exactly like the one I had left at home.

When the shop-keeper told me the price I looked at her in astonishment. She wanted 80 sen, just twice what I had paid for the other hat in Tokio. It appeared that there were costs of transportation, and then she probably presumed that women who

travelled as far as this were rich. I handed her my 52 sen and we began to plead with her unceasingly, panting and blushing, telling her the whole story and making at every word another bow. The lady had no heart. She reduced the price five sen, and then she was inflexible. She was a married lady and she understood that it was absolutely necessary for us to have this hat. A gentleman probably would have lowered the price at once.

I could have stamped my feet with fury. With our robes, our sashes, our bags, our umbrellas, our hair-pins—without counting Taro-San's clothes—we had upon us some 250 yen worth of various objects; and we did not find in our bags, our sleeves or our sashes the sum of 23 sen in order to put a wretched red cap on the head of Taro-San!

The three other hats cost only half as much and I would have had enough to buy one of them. But I ignored them. They were unworthy of Taro-San: very small and not bright enough.

Otoku-San was smitten with an idea. We had in our purses return tickets which had a value. It would have been distressing to give up our railway tickets, but we could offer those for the tramway to Fujisawa; that would leave us no more than an

hour's walk to the station. The Tokio tramway tickets also were not necessary. The distance from the Manseibashi station to my honorable-husband's house was only some 45 minutes.

I offered the six tickets to the lady, who was willing to accept them for the balance of the price, and carefully I tied the red hood around the neck of Taro-San.

Our excitement calmed down a little. At last the nightmare was over. What a stroke of good fortune, to have found this hat! My last prayer to Our Lady the Goddess had been salutary. I was filled with gratitude toward Otoku-San, who had had the ingenious idea of turning over the return tickets. Generously I told her that she could take home the beautiful Tanuki.

And now, what next? We had gone past the hotel and were near the footbridge. After our recent excitement none of us had any appetite; we were tired, we had seen all there was to see, bought all that it was necessary to buy. The girls proposed to turn back home; even now we would not reach Tokio until quite late at night.

Otoku-San was obliged to return tonight to Tokio; they would be waiting for her at home. To

be sure she often stayed away all night and nobody would worry about her. It would happen this way: after dinner at five o'clock in the evening, you go to some friend's house to exchange news. Because of the demands of politeness, the sentences are long and the stories generally last some time. At seven o'clock comes the customary bedtime, and still you haven't said half what you have to say. So you stay all night, to lie on the great mattress where the girls sleep and gossip together in the darkness. Hardly ever do more than one of you doze off at the same time. And at four o'clock in the morning, when everybody gets up, you haven't even yet told all the news. So you promise to come again the next evening to finish it. Consequently; you would not have said anything at home, and nobody would have paid any attention to your absence.

But for two days now at Otoku-San's they had been marvelling over the picnic at Enoshima, and tonight everybody would be waiting for her with the electric light turned on—her grandmother, her mother, her sisters, and even her little brothers who would not have wanted to go to bed. Squatting in a circle the women would do their sewing, with the imminent hope of listening to the story of her ad-



ventures and rejoicing in the beautiful gifts she would bring back. Was that perhaps her step in the court? No; each time only the snore of her honorable-father or her honorable-older-brothers. . . .

She felt herself obliged to get home as soon as possible. It was almost four o'clock in the afternoon and she had so many things to tell that, even if she were already home, no one there would get to bed before morning.

In my case it was different. There was no reason why I must get back to Tokio tonight, and my husband would go to bed with soul serene at his usual hour. Since I have been taking care of Taro-San, I have stayed out all night quite often without warning him, and he doesn't bother about me. As a matter of fact he isn't very rich and his house has no bath-rooms. Formerly, every night after dinner, I used to go with him to the public bath. Now most of the time I go to call on one of my friends who has means, the lady who sells dried fish, or milady the milliner, or milady the wife of the most-honorable-city-hall-clerk. They let us know in advance on what night they are going to light up their baths. You find yourself there in the com-



pany of a number of other women, their relatives. It is a matter of courtesy to go there, and it helps you keep up your position. One after another we get into the honorable-hot-bath, the oldest first. It is proper that they have the cleanest water—after the gentlemen, who have taken their baths earlier.

In this way, Taro-San avoids the danger of drafts as at the public baths, and I have the pleasure of showing him to the other ladies, who admire him more every time. After the bath it isn't polite to leave too soon and so we sit around and talk. Meanwhile Taro-San goes to sleep; and what can I do? Impossible to wake the poor little darling up. He might not get to sleep again all night! The other women understand this, and so I stay. In the beginning I used to sleep with one of the family, but Taro-San would disturb her. So now they let me have the mattress of the servant, whom they send out to sleep with the servant of a neighbor. Thus I don't put anyone to any inconvenience. And in the beginning too I would always try to send word to my husband, but this was quite difficult. Now he is never anxious if I am away all night. On the

contrary he is happy, for he is able to practice on the shakuhachi \* to his heart's content. I myself am very fond of that music, but I can never listen to it, because this sound sets Taro-San's teeth on edge.

Taro-San wakes up very early, so that I can get home before dawn. I lie down beside my husband, and before the maid gets up, if he desires, we have still time for a pleasant little half-hour. If I had been there all night, what more could he have had? We would merely have slept.

So there was nothing to prevent Taro-San staying tonight at Enoshima. Moreover, made drowsy by the fresh air, he had fallen asleep. There would be danger of his catching cold on the train home. And finally, above all, I was eager to have Taro-San spend the night in the hotel. To have stayed while yet so young in such an honorable place would be a fine feather in his cap. It would be one of the great moments of his career. If he had not had a hat I would have thought otherwise; but since, after all our effort, Our Lady the Goddess had permitted him to find one that was decent, if perhaps modest,

\* A sort of bamboo flute which gives a melancholy tone.

I had no right to let Taro-San lose this unique opportunity.

So ceremoniously I reminded the girls that the foreign Lord was waiting for us and that it would not be proper for us to break our promise. I even urged Otoku-San to go back to the hotel with us, pointing out to her that she could take advantage of the honorable-hot-bath which is so restful.

The young lady my neighbor of course had no right to any preference. Her duty compelled her to comply with the desires of her guests and she walked smiling along with us.

I perceived by her air of submission that she was not glad to be going back to the hotel. She hoped that the foreign Lord would have departed, which would have settled everything. Probably she had some suspicion of the foreign Lord's intentions in regard to her. Pretty, fresh and well-dressed as she was, she could tempt even a foreign Lord. She had taken his money and she remained his guest at the hotel. Thus she would have certain obligations to him. From a distance this fact had not frightened her. It is all so natural. With a foreign Lord it might be even interesting. But hour by hour as the

time approached she was less and less curious. To be sure this was not the first time, but always before it was with young men from our own people, with whom she was acquainted. And it happened without reflection. Now, she had had only too much time to think. This hotel, entirely too sumptuous for her, the young-lady servant who would wait on her with a prying and extravagant politeness; the gentlemen of the foreign Lord's party, whom she would not meet, but by whom in advance she knew herself to be scorned; the foreign Lord himself, so big, so unknown and so bizarre—all these things certainly must have made her heart beat fast.

We arrived at the court-yard of the hotel and she faltered a moment at her first glance into the foyer. Those enormous fascinating shoes were still there on the floor. I was quite surprised to see her halt. If I had been in her place, I would have kept in mind the fact that the hotel was part of the programme for her guests. Since it was their desire to rest there, I would have gone on in without a moment's hesitation, a gesture that is very impolite.

But voluntarily she went ahead again. Now the

young-lady servant who had been waiting for our arrival appeared all at once in a crowd. Inclining her head, and with a gentle little smile, our hostess led the way into the hotel.

In all that had happened before I had thought only of Taro-San. But nevertheless, it is wise for a girl to have an understanding of men. On her bridal night her husband will think all the more of her. He will be more attentive, and she will bring to birth more quickly a fine and honorable son.

Is that not the only end of marriage?





## VII. GEISHA-GIRL

*After a fire-fly  
I ran with lifted arms . . .  
It vanished, dancing.*

NEVER had I expected to be presented some day so intimately to a gentleman of a foreign race. But it happened that I was one of a number of geisha-girls engaged for the banquet given this foreign Lord at the Hotel Umematsuya. And I always have so wanted a camera!

A camera serves to take pictures, but that is not the principal purpose it serves. One must regard it as a special treasure, a curious toy of unique value, which it is most distinguished to own.

We girls, we geisha-girls, you ask: what have we

to desire? We are lodged and fed in our geishaya.\* We have new costumes as often as we could wish. Never do we go out twice in the same robe; and when we are engaged for ceremonial banquets, we even change our costumes several times during the evening. To be sure they are not absolutely new, but they are very effective. Some of them are bought second-hand from the best geishaya at Tokio, and some are rented. But I am always very prettily dressed; I have nothing to complain about.

As for cosmetics and creams, it is the same. We are entitled each to one book of powder-paper an evening; that is sufficient, I think. And we are always supplied with a little box of tooth-picks so that we can offer them to the gentlemen during the repast.

In addition to all these advantages we are given a certain percentage of the money we earn for the geishaya. That enables us to save a little, if we ever acquire the habit.

And so, what have we to desire? . . . Well, jewels, for instance? Don't talk to me about jewels! Suppose that a kind gentleman gives you a buckle of green jade with which to fasten your obi;

\* Establishments of geisha-girls.



your friends will tell you that it is a family heirloom or that he bought it second-hand; in either case the gift has no value. And after examining the buckle they will whisper next that it is an imitation jade. What can you say? In our country everything is imitated so well and in so many different ways that there is only one means to determine the genuine: it is that which costs the most.

Let me tell you something that happened to me recently. I am nineteen years old and I am already approaching the decline of life; I have therefore some experience. I bought from the chief jeweller of Kamakura, which is the nearest city, a pearl ring, very good-looking, for the sum of fifteen yen. Fifteen yen, that is a big price! And I paid the jeweller in the presence of two girl friends of mine. Consequently my ring was not disputed by my companions and I wore it with honor on my little finger.

Some time later, walking down the Boulevard Ginza in Tokio, I perceived in a show-window a ring larger than mine and equally guaranteed, advertised for 11 yen. I was annoyed, especially as one of my best friends was with me: Koume-San,\*

\* Miss Little-Plum.

and she is not one to keep her eyes in the sleeve of her kimono! She pretended to have seen nothing, but a hundred steps farther she pointed out to me, with a show of innocence, a ring in another shop with an enormous pearl, marked four yen 50. The pearl was not warranted, but it looked even more genuine than the other two. I blinked my eyes with rage. This is the sort of thing you could kill yourself over.

On returning to Enoshima I gave the ring at once to Kame-Chan,† one of the youngest girls in the geishaya, thirteen years old. She could not understand my unforeseen generosity, and she tried to make the other girls believe that she had received the ring from an old gentleman. But children know so much nowadays. No one believed her; they recognized the ring as mine; and furthermore it was too big for Kame-Chan and she could wear it only on her thumb.

That experience discouraged me with jewels; they are objects of too uncertain a value. A camera is different. Everyone can verify the price in the catalogues, and it's very well known that the dealers will never give a reduction. Then, if you ar-

† Miss Little-Turtle.

range to have one sent home to be paid for on delivery, and if, after paying the bill, you gather your friends and open the box in their presence, and if you show them the slip guaranteeing that the camera is new, even the most envious are forced to congratulate you without even a mental reservation and you are happy indeed.

Unfortunately one must have money. It is my habit to spend what I earn as soon as I get it. Then too I don't earn any enormous fees; I don't have engagements every night like some of the geisha-girls who are so very successful, and sometimes I am very disconsolate.

Nevertheless I am gracefully formed, and it is with satisfaction that I glance at myself in the mirror every ten minutes. I am among the prettiest geisha-girls in Enoshima. The proof of that is that last winter, when the photographer was seeking some subject for postal-cards for the New Year, it was I that he chose. He took my picture in a magnificent robe, holding in my arms a cardboard dog; for according to Chinese astronomy this year is sacred to the Dog. More than a hundred times was I sold at Kamakura! How proud I felt! I even

received some letters from gentlemen. But they were not very refined persons.

In my profession this is how we earn our money: we are invited by gentlemen to entertain them during their dinner, and we are paid by the hour. It is necessary therefore to have frequent and long engagements.

Our engagements fall into two principal classes: official banquets, and private dinners without ceremonies.

The banquets are as a rule dinners for groups of officers, government officials or business associates. They are very solemn spectacles. In the beginning there are speeches. In my long career, how many speeches that I could not understand at all have I listened to! But I listen always attentively for I am eager to learn.

Throughout the dinner the gentlemen discuss between themselves those matters which interest them and do not pay much attention to us. They will talk through an entire banquet about a single subject like the latest American cannon, or speculation in rice. One can never know beforehand how tedious all this is going to be.

The gentleman who arranges the banquet asks by name for a certain few geisha-girls at the time most in vogue, whose presence will add distinction to the affair. He does not always get them for they may have been engaged elsewhere. The rest of the geisha-girls are engaged simply in a number sufficient to make up the list required. And our principal function is to stay kneeling politely in front of the gentlemen, separated from them by the width of the low table on which dinner is served, and to watch to see that their cups of sake are never empty. While they are talking between themselves they keep drinking absent-mindedly and it is our duty to make them drink as much as possible. From time to time during the repast we give an interlude of music or dancing, but the gentlemen must appear not to pay any attention.

This is the difficult part of our work: interrupting for a moment his conversation with his neighbor, the gentleman you are serving flings at you some foolish and bantering question, and you must reply with a remark respectful but at the same time piquant. The geisha-girls are the only women that etiquette authorizes to respond to the compliments of men, and it is for that reason that men spend so

many bank-notes to invite us to watch them eat.

Unfortunately I have a serious fault: I have no cleverness in repartee. When a gentleman speaks to me thus unexpectedly, it freezes me stiff and all I can do is bow and say automatically, "*Sayo de gozaimasu-ka.*" \* That is how in deference to him his wife or his daughter should answer when he asks them a question, and it was with the hope of hearing something more unforeseen and diverting that he did me the honor of addressing me. So my reply bores him; two minutes later it is to one of my companions that he speaks. And I run the risk of not being invited the next time, by a man who has known me for as long as two years. What a humiliation!

The repast is over usually toward seven in the evening, and after the tables have been cleared we gather in little groups and play polite society games with the gentlemen, like "Charades" or "Forfeits" or "Simon Says Thumbs Up." †

That enlivens them! In amusing themselves with us their hearts are lifted and presently one by one

\* "Is it indeed the truth you speak, Honorable-Sir?" (very polite).

† Roughly the Japanese games are of this genre.



they disappear, some to join their wives who have already spread the nuptial couch on the matting, others who are not married to seek one of those nocturnal houses that are called politely "Lotus Ponds." When their discussion of public affairs at the beginning of the banquet is very heated, it is a good sign. They drink the more recklessly and they grow amorous the more quickly. The last of them is gone before eight o'clock, and we wait no longer to dine ourselves, for we are very hungry.

To serve at such banquets is the easiest of my duties. The private dinners are reserved for the privileged. They are like this: Three or four good friends have dinner together and they summon some geisha-girls to keep them company. They do not ask us to sing or to dance, but only to talk, to laugh and to make them laugh. They kneel around a low table and we mingle with them, all of us facing each other; it is much less formal. They drink a great deal and we ourselves drink a little. They smoke all the time and we keep lighting their cigarettes at the charcoal-burner. But this is not bad for one's health, because Japanese cigarettes are half cardboard; the other half smokes but it does not smell very much. The chatter goes on and on,



and if we laugh very hilariously the principal servants in the hotel sometimes come to join us. I do not approve of that; it is preferable that they keep their place. In order that we too can eat, the gentlemen give us chop-sticks and we help ourselves from their side-dishes. Quite informally we all have a good time and finally we play games together, but this time quite cheerfully. About eleven o'clock supper is served, of soba \* or sushi; † and at one o'clock in the morning, at the latest, we part in the gayest and friendliest fashion. We have spent a pleasant evening and at the same time have earned some money, since many hours will be reckoned on the bill of the geishaya.

I have heard them say that on similar occasions the German army officers actually cannot keep from undressing at least one girl whom they put all naked in the middle of the table. Fortunately our countrymen have not this habit, for we might catch cold. Although we are separated from them at table by barely a few inches, they never so much as touch us. And if towards midnight the jokes do become often as heavy as Mount Asama, not one

\* A kind of macaroni.

† A kind of sandwich of rice with fish or sea-weed.

of them by the least gesture makes us feel that he perceives us to be of the sex in which gentlemen are interested. They have come only to enjoy an evening of distracting chatter with some pretty girls, who know how to dress and are witty and free to converse with them agreeably. That they would never be able to find in their own families or with their relations.

Consequently the geisha-girls most in demand are not the prettiest, like myself; but alas! the wittiest. That is to say the most pert and the naughtiest tongues; they know the best stories. Little by little they acquire a vogue, and in Japan the vogue endures because there is no reason why it should cease. They are invited out every night, your geishaya becomes fashionable, and you profit in consequence of their popularity. But you have little liking for them because they wear the prettiest clothes, and stick up their noses like the daughters of a shogun,\* and have enormous cameras. Smiling, you wither away with jealousy.

That is why, not being celebrated, I did not see any way ever to get a camera! . . . You might think perhaps that gentlemen would give us money

\* Anciently, the title borne by the regent of the Empire.

sometimes with a more interested purpose. That is not done, it is not our profession and we would be disgraced.

One can divide women into two categories: those who, like us, live independently by their profession; and the rest, whose existence is assured by their submission to men. This last category includes married women and o-joro-san.\* I learned the other day that in foreign countries o-joro-san are not respected as they should be. I was getting along very well, and I was so angry that I covered a playing-card with my reflections. What difference is there indeed between a married woman and an o-joro-san! Neither the one nor the other has chosen her destiny; it was her father who made the decision and who gets all the profit. The one is honored if she is smiling and submissive to an honorable-spouse changed several times every night; and the other is honored if she fulfills the same duties with a gentleman whom likewise she has not chosen and who will remain the same all her life. When you consider, neither of these alternatives is more ridiculous than the other; and I remember that I

\* Word for word, "very honorable ladies." In English, "harlot."

wrote by way of conclusion: "I would much rather be a geisha-girl."

I am satisfied to be a geisha-girl and I am always thankful to my father for having given me this profession. It was by good luck. I was eleven and one of the prettiest little girls in the school at Fujisawa. My father, who worked in a carpenter-shop, desired money to set up in business for himself. Through an agency he borrowed 500 yen from the honorable-proprietor of a fine geishaya at Enoshima, and he entrusted me to this gentleman as security; it was understood that after a lapse of fifteen years the debt would be paid and I would be free. So my father bought a big shop; and as for me, they taught me literature, dancing, music, the ceremony of serving tea, and good manners.

In the end I became a geisha-girl, which means, etymologically, an artist. I have costumes, money in my pocket; I frequent the society of gentlemen of high station. I am much happier and of a more elevated social rank than my honorable-sisters who remained in the village. I was able last winter to take account of that, when after my bronchitis I went to spend some days of convalescence with my

family: the whole village showed an unbounded deference toward me.

Nevertheless, whenever I go to Asakusa, I always make my acts of grace in the temple of Our Lady the Goddess Kwannon.\* Suppose that my father had not needed money until six years later, when I was seventeen; I would have been too old to learn the profession of geisha, and, pretty as I was, he would have confided me under the same conditions to a joroya, where I would have practised a profession honorable enough perhaps, but more arduous and less distinguished.

You ask me then if geisha-girls have no lovers? To be sure they have. It is contrary to all the laws of nature that a girl remain a virgin when she has reached a nubile age. Celibacy is ridiculous, and it would be still more so if it were not so difficult to observe. But we may accept as gifts from our lovers only trifles and trinkets, of which we have no need in order to exist.

Some geisha-girls conceal their love affairs. That shows that they go with men not the most refined, and the lady-manager would not like it. Others

\* The Goddess of Mercy.

try by their flirtations to induce some rich old widower to marry them. That happened very often in the old days, but it is less frequent now. However they leave the profession and become "kept women," which is a kind of marriage.

Among my companions I am one of the most prudent; I have an honorable-friend to whom I have been faithful almost a year, ever since we met. This young gentleman is very tender and I have a deep affection for him. He is big and strong and sweet! He has a beautiful uniform, but when we go out together I see him always, alas, dressed in civilian clothes in the European style. He is a student in the Military Marine School at Yokosuka. And he is two years older than I, but between the two of us it is I who lead—without seeming to do so—because I have more experience of life. For six years now I have been listening incognito to the conversation of gentlemen at the dinner-table; and that makes you old, believe me! While he has never been present even at a dinner of women alone!

Almost every Sunday, when he is out on leave, we go on an outing together. When we are outside we hardly ever talk. In the train he must pretend that he does not know me; and then when we are



walking together, good manners require that I keep behind him by at least three paces. But I have leisure to admire how neatly his jacket fits, without a wrinkle; and I carry his camera and his railway guide; all that makes me very happy. Always at last we come to some little hotel, and there also we hardly ever talk, because my friend is not talkative. But when the servant-girl has brought our dinner and has gone away, drawing the panel shut behind her on its groove, we sit down very close to each other, as close as he desires: he is so tender.

Every time we try to vary our destination and find some new and picturesque place to visit, and always in the beginning I am a little afraid. My friend is brave, too brave. There is not a rushing brook that he does not want to cross bare-legged, not a rocky scarp that he does not scale. From the top of it he calls to me. If I cry out in my fright, he laughs that it is not dangerous and does something twice as bad. And if I say nothing, just to prove that it is dangerous all the same, he makes me climb up with him, and tells me that we will fall and be killed together, and that that will be beautiful.

So I always favor flat country, where in Japan one can be sure to find landscapes picturesque and



without danger. The brooks are so narrow that I can step across them, in spite of my robe being not very wide. The rocks which have been set out on purpose are no larger than a cake-dish, and the trees are all dwarfed so that I can see over them. The only risk one runs is of bruising one's foot or squashing a gold-fish! And at the finest outlook you find always the little hotel which is the best in the place. Moreover, in this season, it rains hard and more often than not we go only a short distance on our excursion.

It is expensive to be the friend of a geisha-girl; that is why our lovers are almost always older men; the young men have not enough money. My friend is of a well-to-do family, but just think of how much he spends every Sunday! I am not thinking of the cost of railroad fare or jin-ricksha, or of the hotel, or of the little present that he feels he is obliged to buy me every time as a souvenir. But since he engages me for a day he must pay the geishaya the price of 30 yen; I am considered in the first class and that is the fee. He has the right to ask me no more than to sing and dance for him, to talk with him and smile; nothing else. But I never refuse him anything.

I forgot the luxury-tax which he must pay in addition and which the manager marks down on his bill. At present the Government classifies us as luxuries. In my opinion this is an injustice; geisha-girls are necessary to Japan, and all the gentlemen with whom I have discussed the matter feel the same way about it.

For these reasons he has only just enough money to get along, and I would not like to have him come less often, because I am happy when I am with him. Indeed I would try to see him on my day off, but if I were discovered by the lady-manager there would be a great to-do. Moreover as a precaution they never grant me Sunday for a holiday. So I try to reduce the expense. For instance, I turn over to the house my twenty percent of the day's fee, and I explain to my friend that as an old customer he is accorded a special rate. He is so much in love with me that he believes me. . . .

That is my story. That is why I was so eager to have a camera and why I had no hope of ever possessing one. My friend offered me his one day, but I refused it because I do not want to take anything from him, and also because it is a "Vest Pocket," a tiny model designed especially to fit into the little

bags of geisha-girls, which the American factories send us by the million. All my friends have that kind; I wanted a larger one, brand new.

Last night, six geisha-girls were required for a dinner at the Hotel Umematsuya. Besides myself there were four girls from my geishaya: first of all, Miss Little-April, our honorable elder-sister, who was in charge of us for the evening. She is famous and I am not jealous of her; she is not vain and gives us always good advice.

Next came Miss Little-Plum, who is my own age; she is my best friend and I have already spoken about her. Finally, the two little girls, Miss Little-Turtle and Fuji-Chan,\* although they are not yet very well educated. The sixth geisha-girl engaged for this evening was Miss Little-Forest, a celebrated geisha from the place next door to ours, who prides herself that she repels ostentatiously the advances of men. That is easily explained: her tastes lie in another direction. From time to time—I won't say how—but Miss Little-Forest surely exaggerates. I detest her.

The gentlemen this evening were not many, but

\* Miss Little-Soybean.

they were giving a most ceremonious banquet, in honor of a professor of a foreign race; the occasion was unique and excited us greatly.

I had seen previously under these conditions only an American gentleman who came up one evening in an automobile with some gentlemen from Yokohama, with whom he had business dealings. He said not a word to anybody and without ceasing we poured sake for him to drink. For my part four cups \* are enough to make me happy, and for the gentleman from Yokohama twenty cups were a plentiful measure. But we counted thirty-seven for their guest, and he was still as silent and as stolid as the venerable Daibutsu † of the city of Kamakura; we were utterly bewildered by it. To be sure he did not know the Japanese language, but the other gentlemen had taught us to say to him "San-kyu" and "Silovyu," words which are it would seem very elegant in American. If he only had answered "Yes" to us, we would very well have understood.

I have learned since that the Government has

\* A cup of sake contains about as much as a whisky-glass.

† A gigantic bronze statue of Buddha.

prohibited alcohol in America. I can imagine why. It was money lost, it never succeeded in cheering them up.

The honorable-foreigner of this evening was another kind, and much more amusing. You will see. After taking the honorable-hot-bath, the gentlemen dressed and at four o'clock, just before dinner, they took, in the European fashion, a little collation in a room adjoining that of the banquet. There was coffee, cakes, liqueurs and cigars. We geisha-girls made our appearance graciously and, quick with attentions and assisting politely in the service, put ourselves on friendly terms with the men.

I already knew the gentleman who was giving the banquet; he was an honorable and rich manufacturer who lives at Azabu, the fashionable quarter of Tokio.

In addition to the foreigner, the guests included Mr. Yamaguchi, who it seems holds office in the administration, and Mr. Takamori, a young designer who interested me very little. For the first time I prostrated myself before Professor Kamei, who, by his erudition on the subject of wild animals, had overwhelmed the foreigner. Honorable-savants like

him are the glory of our country, and I proffered him an absolute devotion.

Discreetly but curiously I scrutinized the Occidental. His skin was indeed white; not like mine, however; I have always upon my face three layers of beauty milk. His stature made a deep impression on us; he was colossal. But he was utterly ignorant of manners; the evening would be somewhat shocking, but it would amuse us.

The excitement began at once. The foreigner said that he had spilled a glass of liqueur on his arm and asked to go to the bath-room to wash. Do you know why this subterfuge? For what a rare spectacle, to be sure! To go and look at three naked women, squatting around the honorable-hot-bath, and dabbling in it a young gentleman who sniffled and did not even know how to swim! That is a sight one can see any day and anywhere; it is nothing to bother about. But the foreigner attached a special interest to these persons, whom he had brought to the hotel unexpectedly and whom he certainly planned to rejoin that night. Now, they were women of the lower bourgeoisie of Ryogoku, which is not among the elegant quarters of Tokio; and one of them was an honorable-married-woman.



One could not imagine anything more incredible.

You should have seen the consternation of the others when the foreigner asked to go to wash his hand; catastrophe loomed upon them, this was a step taken toward that which they dreaded. The grotesque had already begun; if it came to its climax that night, they themselves would be the laughing-stock of all the nine generations.\* They were crushed, as one could perceive in their redoubled smiles and their lisping politeness. As for us, who were not compromised in the affair, we threw each other significant glances, on account of the wager.

Our two honorable-elder-sisters, Miss Little-April and Miss Little-Forest, had made an exciting bet in regard to the foreigner. The former had declared that shortly he would go to join one of the honorable-ladies of Ryogoku, while the latter insisted that, since he had invited so many, he wanted to spend the night with two together. Such things do happen. And nevertheless Miss Little-Forest lets it be understood that she knows nothing about

\* The four preceding generations, their own, and the four to come.



men! Two or four. Never three: that is an unlucky number.

It was agreed that the loser should dress the winner's hair the next time she expressed the desire to wash her head and to refreshen her false curls. It is a disagreeable job to dress a geisha-girl's hair; the coiffure is so complicated. And you cut your fingers knotting up the waxed thread, and prick yourself on the wires, and get all greasy with the oil of camellia which you must pour on in streams. During this time the girl who is having her hair dressed, kneeling in front of the mirror, has no more to do than think of nothing, if she can; or order the work started all over again until the whole construction is without any flaw.

The fact is that the foreigner had spoken the truth. Getting upon his knees like all the rest he upset a glass of maraschino in his sleeve. But he must have done it on purpose; the posture of kneeling is the most convenient for drinking.

Mizu-San, the servant, hurried to fetch a basin of water to wash his arm, and my friend Miss Little-Plum busied herself helping to scrub him. Miss Little-Plum is a schemer.

At last, about half-past four, having finished

their coffee and thrown away their cigars, the gentlemen went into the banquet room. It was an imposing sight. In a large bare hall five cushions were laid on the floor and before them five low tables, of wood lacquered red. They are more formal than black tables and one does not use them ordinarily except for wedding banquets. I thought to myself smiling that we might have invited the married ladies who were at that moment in the honorable-hot-bath.

The gentleman being so few, their cushions had been placed some distance apart, to make a better showing. To make up for it, they would have the alternative either of talking louder or less often.

As is customary, the cushions had been disposed in the form of the character *ko* in the signs *kata-kana*.\* They had put the foreigner in the place of honor, at the rear of the room and just in front of *tokonoma*.† Professor Kamei was given the place of distinction at his left, and Mr. Yamaguchi was at his right side. Opposite, at the left of the foreigner, was the young designer Mr. Takamori; behind him was the door into the garden. Across from

\* We would say in a horse-shoe.

† A sort of alcove which is the sacred spot in every room.

Mr. Takamori was the gentleman from Azabu who, being host occupied the most humble place.

The stranger therefore had before him all the perspective of the hall where shortly we were to dance. At his left the door was open on the garden, and at his right on the parqueted foyer of the hotel. In summer it is hot and they throw open all the partitions in order to have air.

The gentlemen knelt silently at their places, and we, kneeling in front of them, graciously filled their cups with sake. It was a solemn moment, the speeches were about to begin.

This time the speeches were particularly long and unintelligible; not one of us could understand a word. But I shall repeat them from memory, just for curiosity.

The gentleman from Azabu, drawing himself up on his knees, took the floor with the customary formalities, in a manner most polite, that is to say very vague; and he said how much his friends and the humble personage which was himself considered themselves honored by the fragrant presence of so august a Lord; in concluding, he lifted his cup to the success of the important mission which had brought the foreign professor to Japan.

In his turn the honorable-foreigner began to speak. On his first phrases we glanced at each other from behind our fans. He spoke as one talks, although when one pronounces an address one should speak as one writes; the words naturally are different and much more refined. Happily for him he got tangled up in his sentences and preferred to continue in French. Mr. Yamaguchi, who knows French wonderfully, translated as he proceeded.

The foreigner said that he had the honor to be the envoy extraordinary of the Commission on Social Morality of the Bureau of the League of Nations. It had been decided that an investigation should be made into the condition of women in the former colonies of Germany. Among the four nations, Japan had insisted that the investigation begin in the territories under her mandate. Our Government desired to make known the works it had instituted to relieve the condition of young girls in the islands of Polynesia where Germany before had negligently permitted free love to flourish.

The foreigner had had the honor of being designated to conduct this interesting investigation and had taken passage for the Far-East. On the boat, however, reading a travel-journal, he had learned

that the previous investigator had been eaten by the natives of those islands. So he had stopped over at Tokio to inquire of our Department of Colonies whether the Japanese authorities had been able likewise to modify the Polynesian diet. He was told that they were going to make an inquiry and would he be kind enough to await the outcome of it; he was therefore waiting at Tokio.

Fortunately this spring a Universal Exposition had opened at the park of Ueno, and in the Colonial Pavilion he had been able to study a mural decoration dedicated to the islands of the Pacific. He had found it a very interesting study which he went often to see and which had made it possible for him to send to Geneva already two reports, both long and pregnant. Some time ago he went to the Department of Colonies to ask if there was any news. They told him very courteously that they had not yet complete data: it made one fear precisely that the investigators had been eaten themselves. They were now going to send some thinner investigators to the Polynesians and they urged him to wait patiently. That is why, in spite of his zeal, the foreigner had not yet been able to do justice to the civilizing work of Japan

in the territories administered before her by the barbarians.

*Sa!* It was over at last and I exhaled my breath which I had been holding all this time. The whole speech was absolutely incomprehensible. But the triumph of Professor Kamei was only the more meritorious, for this foreigner must be a man of extreme wisdom in his own country. What a misfortune, that he chose his friends in so vulgar a suburb as Ryogoku.

At this juncture, Mr. Yamaguchi drew himself up once more on his knees to speak in his own name. This was contrary to custom since there had been already speech and reply. But Mr. Yamaguchi had something important to say.

Mr. Yamaguchi explained that, out of national pride, he wanted to banish from the mind of the foreigner any suspicion of bureaucratic negligence on the part of our Department of Colonies. In the discourse just now finished, it was apparent that our Department of Foreign Affairs desired, through deference toward so precious a guest, to hold him back from a dangerous voyage in distant islands. It was for this friendly reason that the inquiry ordered in Polynesia would probably not be



ended for some years. But if the honorable-foreigner were eager to go back to Europe, he should not hesitate to ask of the Department of Colonies itself a report on the very subject he was sent to investigate. Already for six months they had probably had ready for him an exact and documented study of the matter; all the foreigner would have to do is sign it. Let the foreigner, if he desired to gain glory in his mission, feel free to tell at home what danger he survived in Polynesia! Far from contradicting him, our Government would be delighted with his harmless interpretation of the facts.

Mr. Yamaguchi concluded in a hush of general admiration. I had not understood much of what he said, but enough to know that it was in regard to political principles and that Mr. Yamaguchi would yet be one of our great statesmen.

The time for serious matters was over and now it was necessary to forget all these solemn speeches, so the gentleman from Azabu, whose collar had been bothering him, announced to the party that they had come to the country to enjoy themselves in an informal way and that it would be proper to make themselves comfortable. The young-lady



servants were waiting in the lobby with night-kimonos and in the flicker of an eyelash shirts and trousers were dropped on the matting. And then the gentlemen once more knelt down, clad now only in kimonos, which are much more cool.

We geisha-girls, in order to please the gentlemen, have to wear an elegant obi which is voluminous and hot, and a head-dress twice the weight of the usual one. Miss Little-Turtle even had in her coiffure a whole orchestra of tiny bells. As for the gentlemen, they shave their heads in summer for the sake of coolness.

The dinner began; that is to say these gentlemen, without eating anything or at most but a bite, dipped their chop-sticks into their dishes. For while their host, in order to honor his guests, is obliged to serve them the most delicate and the most elaborate viands possible, they must not touch them, in order to show their host that they find all their pleasure in his companionship and not in the satisfaction of their gluttony. As for drinking, that is different. But it is a blessing to both the hotel-keeper and ourselves, that the guests do not eat, because they often serve us the remains from the

banquet. The foreigner, however, made an un-availing effort with his chop-sticks to eat the egg-course—which was served merely by way of decoration. They ceremoniously presented him with a spoon. He was becoming ridiculous.

Instead of squatting with his legs crossed as were now the other gentleman, the foreigner had called for a second cushion in order to raise himself higher and he was seated, leaning against a pillar of the Tokonoma, with his legs stretched out on the floor in front of him. One never leans on the Tokonoma and Miss Little-Plum let me know that she was shocked.

The banquet was lugubrious. The gentlemen moodily discussed the League of Nations. I did not manage to make out just what that is, and they themselves did not seem to know exactly. Everybody was thinking gloomily of the girls from Ryogoku, who, somewhere, in some remote room in the hotel, must be dining on honorable-rice. In front of each gentleman, there was a package of cigarettes in a saucer, and a charcoal burner at which to light them. But hardly anyone smoked and nobody offered us a cigarette, which was a fundamental impoliteness. And finally, it was seldom

that we had to refill our bottles of sake. A bad omen.

The foreigner behaved like a fisherman's son. Here is what happened. Since he was the guest of honor, the two geisha-girls, our elder-sisters, were kneeling before him one on each side, seeking politely to engage him in conversation and watching to keep his cup always full. He was moreover the only one who was drinking. According to etiquette, they must not leave their places until he did them the courtesy of giving them a little sake to drink in his own cup. Many a time he emptied that but he seemed never to have any intention of letting them put their lips to it. Instead he kept looking rather at us, the young and uncelebrated girls who were kneeling before the other less important banqueters. To be sure, Miss Little-April is already thirty-two, and she is very lean. As for Miss Little-Forest, those of her teeth that were not of gold were beginning to get very black. But they are nevertheless the geisha-girls most in vogue and their names are known clear to Tokio; he should have been sensible of the honor they did him in giving their attention only to him.

I am not ambitious and I prefer to sit ordinar-

ily in the less prominent places, where the young men are sitting; after all it is more fun there. I was kneeling opposite Mr. Takamori, who shortly started telling me stories which mistakenly he thought were witty. It is so easy for gentlemen to be clever and yet they do not always succeed in being so.

Here is an experience that happened to me last week. I was pouring sake for a gentleman who was about to leave for Europe, and he offered to bring me back some presents. Merely a gesture but a very pleasant one just the same.

However this gentleman told me that he was going to the city of Pari, which is the gay capital of the Empire of Furansu. He was going there for the purpose chiefly of having a good time, and he would spend a great deal of money. So he wanted to find out what inexpensive presents there were that would please me. And that made his gesture not polite at all.

I asked him in a refined tone to bring me back two of those tooth brushes which are made of a little rod of wood, with the end carved in a small tuft. Here one can get them two for a sen.

I was speaking for the benefit of my friend Miss

Little-Plum who was listening and to whom presently on going home I would politely promise the more beautiful.

The gentleman went even farther; he told me that over there the merchants were doubtless more accommodating, and that if he humbly pleaded with a fruiterer he thought he must get for nothing a cherry twig which he would wrap up in padding and bring back for me.

It was very gross of him and I was indignant. At my first opportunity I rid myself of his company.

It would have been so easy for him to say that he would buy me the tower three hundred metres high which stands in the City of Pari and which, it would seem, is even loftier and more beautiful than the Junikai \* of Asakusa. He might even have added that, in order to preserve my gift from damage on the voyage, he would have it folded up carefully in three sections, very flat, like a kimono.

All that would have been only a whimsy, but how clever! And how cheerfully I would have smiled!

\* A tower of twelve stories which stands in Tokio, in a kind of Luna Park.

Mr. Takamori was one of those heavy-headed young men, and he told me naïvely about an honorable old cabinet minister who had just presented an enormous diamond to one of the principal geisha-girls of Tokio. He himself had brought one just like it for me. Unfortunately he could not find it, he must have dropped it in the train on taking his watch out of his pocket.

I was very vexed. I detest being made fun of: one has to think of one's dignity. Etiquette compelled me to thank him, bowing to the floor, and to mourn his loss as if he had told the truth. But as soon as I could I changed places and knelt down as far away as possible, before Mr. Yamaguchi. Young Mr. Takamori I found most tedious.

He had not guessed that we also had read the story in the paper and that, with Miss Little-April and Miss Little-Plum, we had discussed it very excitedly. It was the only interesting article in the *Hi-no-de*. Only there were not enough details.

Presently came a course in the European fashion in honor of the foreigner. It was served at each table with great ceremony, and I perceived the cook lingering at the end of the corridor, all puffed up with pride, to watch the impression his handi-

work made. It was a round flat plate in the center of which was a little ball of chicken meat, surrounded by four green peas arranged in an oval. It was very pretty. Just the same what bizarre food these people eat! The foreigner was not able, like the others, to pick up the peas with his chop-sticks, notwithstanding that it is a vegetable from his own country. He was compelled to eat like an animal, employing at the same time spoon and fingers. Miss Little-Turtle, who was too young, could not help smiling. It was rude of her and I did not let her watch any longer, sending her to fetch another bottle of sake.

It was almost the middle of the dinner, and time for us to give a musical interlude. Miss Little-Plum and I who were to take no part in it, knelt down between the gentlemen instead of staying in front of them, the better to distract their attention. Nothing could liven them up. But that did not matter to me, my only anxiety was to find out what would happen that night, on account of the wager.

Our two honorable-elder-sisters took their places at the end of the room, backs to the cardboard partition, holding their mandolins on their



knees. Before them were the two little girls with their big drums arrayed on its stand.

As I had foreseen they were going to play *Echigoshishi*, the most famous melody of all our classical music. For the last eight years I have been playing or listening to it almost every night. Yet it always gives me the greatest pleasure, and the men too never weary of it. They all know the tune by heart and they are able to follow the music without even interrupting their conversation: that is a great advantage.

At the first drum-beat I saw that things once more were going wrong. It is not hard to play the big drum. When I was young I studied it for four years. You kneel on the floor; the monstrous instrument is placed on a stand in front of you, and at arm's length above it you hold the two drumsticks. You watch the drum sidewise without seeming to do so, as if you were handling a dangerous animal which is quite likely to attack you. Then you give a little cough as if to revive your courage and you strike the drum two times. Only you must hold back the drumsticks with all your might: at thirteen a girl is not very strong, and if she lets the sticks fall by their own weight they make a ter-

rible noise which quite drowns out the melody. That is what happened now. What a hubbub!

At heart the gentlemen were probably glad, for this tumult was a pretext for them to stop talking. At this point the honorable-servant Mizu-San appeared bringing joss-sticks, the smoke of which serves to drive away mosquitoes. I apprehended that there had been some grave contingency, for the musical interlude is a pause during which all service ceases. Mizu-San knelt down in front of me, and while she was lighting a cluster of josh-sticks at the charcoal and sticking them in the cinders of a little burner, she whispered to me the following news which was indeed extraordinary. One of the girls from Ryogoku, after having a little dinner, had just left the hotel. Consequently only two of the women were left. I was transported with joy. My chance was getting better; for I must confess that I had laid a wager along with Miss Little-April, whose judgment I esteemed very highly. My friend Miss Little-Plum, in a spirit of contrariness, had bet against me. So much the worse for her! In ten minutes we would hear of the departure of another woman and the bet would be won.

Already Mizu-San had gone to tell the news to Miss Little-Plum, who must have been very piqued. Miss Little-April glanced at me from the end of the room; I smiled at her, gently nodding my head, to indicate that I had heard good tidings. Then, curious to find out as soon as possible what they were, she accelerated the tempo of the music. Naturally the little girls started pounding harder and harder on their drum. I believe they even omitted a repeat, but that was of no great importance: Japanese music is repeated over and over again. The piece ended in such a clattering boom-de-aye that you would have thought it was an earthquake.

Into the next room we went to change our costumes, and Miss Little-April and I considered the situation. Our prospects were brighter but they would have been better yet if the women had departed two at a time.

Finally, dressed in new obi of gold brocade, in a long file we made a graceful entrance, each carrying a bowl of black lacquer containing a soup which exhaled a delicious fragrance of sea-weed. That quite amazed me. As a rule in this hotel the cuisine is very bad.

I entered first, ready to serve young Mr. Takamori: Miss Little-April, the most important of us, was to serve the foreigner. As I was passing before him however he gave me a sign to stop and to give my bowl of soup to him instead of taking it to the designer. How impolite, to signal me that way. His vulgarity went beyond endurance and I was filled with wrath. I went on without pausing. The significance of this episode was lost because my friend, Miss Little-Plum, declared that she saw nothing. It is impossible. She was almost behind me. She is a deceitful cat and she speaks always according to her own best interests.

The foreigner choked while drinking the sea-weed bouillon. And like a buffoon he spit out the eye of the tai,\* pulling the sea-weed out of his gullet with his fingers. To be sure, while one is drinking the bouillon one must keep the sea-weed out of one's mouth with the chop-sticks. So, it would seem, they do not teach one to eat bouillon in foreign countries! But to spit out an eye of the tai, the most celebrated and the most costly fish that can be served. . . . Unheard of!

Then the gentleman from Azabu gave a signal

\* A kind of goldfish with a very large eye.

and a few minutes later they brought the foreigner a box of meat, a box of cakes, a box of fish, and a bottle of Bordo wine. Quite rudely he ate part of everything except the Bordo wine which he spit out as quick as the sea-weed soup. That made me chuckle behind my fan, and Professor Kamei, with whom I was sitting, thought that I was laughing at a joke on a theosophical subject which he had just made, and he began to laugh much louder than I.

Miss Little-April and Miss Little-Forest were still kneeling in front of the foreigner, since he had not yet offered them sake. One would have sworn that he did it on purpose. While I was still laughing the honorable-foreigner turned to me and asked me my name, my age and my birthday. A little more and he would have asked how many teeth I had and I would have told him that they were so many that I had never been able to count them without making a mistake. Even with a hand mirror it is hard but it is amusing. You bet on who has the most.

It would not have been proper for me to reply to him myself, since my honorable-elder-sister, Miss Little-April, was nearer him. Graciously she

told him my name and my age. Then turning to me, he held me his cup and poured me some sake. He even wanted to give me a bit of cake, telling me to dip it in the wine.

You can imagine the scene! It was a scurrilous insult to my elder-sister, and an insult even more serious to the gentleman from Abazu, who was host and who had selected Miss Little-April and had brought her there with so much trouble. I was dumbfounded to be the occasion for such a scandal and, bowing clear to the mat, very meekly I drank the sake. Miss Little-Forest too must have been most annoyed and certainly my friend Miss Little-Plum would not be able to deny having seen this. I was comforted in advance to know that I would have her testimony when we went home presently to the geishaya. To be sure it is not honorable to be placarded in so indecent a fashion, but, when one has been wronged, one seeks to draw from it whatever honor one can.

My triumph was not of long duration. The foreigner found an opportunity to ask an honorable servant if the ladies, his guests, had dined well. The servant answered that they had not yet finished but that they were eating almost nothing.

The foreigner mused a few moments, then suddenly he announced that he felt slightly ill. He thought it would be wise not to go back tonight to Tokio, but to rest here at the hotel.

You should have seen the horrible impression produced on the other gentlemen. It was as if the electric light all at once lost half its power. They would have been happy to flatten out and crawl under the matting. The catastrophe drew nigh as we had foreseen.

The other gentlemen showed their consternation and disapproval by dilating upon the words of the foreigner, by vociferating their approval of his decision, by heaping upon him their good wishes and their condolences. They were so confounded that none thought to send him away to rest, for by this time he truly had need of it; his face had become blue-green like a field of young rice. Obviously it was to this end that he had eaten all the boxes of European food and tried to eat all the dishes of Japanese. If like everybody else he had abstained from eating, he would not have succeeded in getting sick. The people of Europe are even more Machiavellian than we.

We geisha-girls were not excited in the least, for



we had predicted long ago this very development; and Miss Little-April offered the foreigner three "Jin-Tan" pills, which are the proper remedy for such illness. Miss Little-Plum flashed a smile at me out of the corner of her eye to show me that she was laughing at me. She is my best friend but sometimes she is a great tease.

Dismally the banquet drew on to its close. They were speaking now of the Esperanto language. That is a country I did not know. But I am not very strong in geography. I listened curiously to find out if they had geisha-girls in that country, if their skin was white, and in what style they dressed. I did not learn anything about them.

The gentlemen had finished with their dishes, they had served honorable-rice, and in due course the guests forced themselves to belch in order to demonstrate to their host that, tempted by the delicious morsels, they had permitted themselves to commit the impoliteness of eating too much. They were not very convincing. As for the foreigner, who could have demonstrated that so easily, he did not even try.

We got up to give a dance number which would mark the end of the banquet. Our honorable-

elder-sisters knelt at the rear of the room with their mandolins, the two little girls squatted before them with their little drums, and Miss Little-Plum and I, standing before the musicians, took the preliminary posture of the dance.

As I had thought, we were to give the *Kappore*, the most celebrated in our repertory of modern dances. Gentlemen listen to it always with untiring delight. The song is very gay and they know it by heart. They also know the steps of the dance and, if they want to amuse themselves, they can imitate them without getting up, with their heads, their shoulders and their arms. If they have drunk a great deal they can come and dance in the midst of us, but we don't encourage that.

On the first note of the music I felt that once again something would go wrong. It is easy enough to play the little drum. There are always two of them tuned in fifths. You squat down on the floor. One drum rests across your knee \* and is held by the left elbow. The other is on your right shoulder and held by the left hand. You wait, eyes fixed and mouth half-opened, as if you were watching the

\* The little drum is shaped like two cones joined at the apex.

approach of a venomous butterfly. Then, on the first and third beats of the music, you utter a quick sharp cry. On the second and fourth beats you strike each drum alternately. It is all so simple! There are other rhythms but this one is the most common. The difficult part of it is to make a noise, because you strike the drum with the flat of your four fingers, and generally you produce nothing but a feeble sound.

To be sure the two little girls were not yet very strong. However they were well nourished. At the first meal of the day, how many cucumbers they can swallow! They never leave any for me.

So one could not hear the drums, and the rhythm was lost. That made the dance very difficult for me. I had to make exactly the same steps as Miss Little-Plum. First, one indicates with one's feet the design of the figure 5.\* That is so that people can see one is wearing an under kimono the pattern of which is harmonized with that of the outer-kimono. Then one puts oneself in profile and swings one's arms as if ringing a bell. But that is not it; one is manœuvring a boat, because *Kappore*

\* The cipher 5 has in Japanese a form much like that in the arabic numerals.

is the story of a vessel laden with oranges. During all this time, our Honorable-elder-sisters were singing the narrative of the pantomime.

At a certain point, one takes three steps backwards, then three steps forward, and one claps three times and cries in a piercing tone, "*Kappore*." At this precise moment the honorable-servant Hana-San appeared at one of the doors. She was very agitated and seemed nonplussed to find us in the middle of the dance. Raising two fingers she signaled to me "Two! Two!" I did not understand and was very disturbed. But at once Hana-San vanished into a room behind us, in order to talk to Miss Little-April through the cardboard partition.

Then indeed the music ceased almost completely. That was the better to hear what Hana-San had to say. Suddenly behind me there was a great rustling in the orchestra. It certainly had something to do with our wager. While I was wondering what it could mean, I lost the measure, missed a repeat, and found myself five or six steps behind Miss Little-Plum who conscientiously had kept on pirouetting. And my humiliation upset me still more.

My awkwardness would not have mattered. The musicians were paying no attention to me and the gentleman for Azabu had disappeared from his place doubtless to settle his bill. The other gentlemen were not looking at me, except the honorable-foreigner who opened his eyes wide but could see nothing. They had lit the electric light just before the dance, and as he occupied the place of honor in the center of the room, there was between him and me, in his line of vision, a whole series of shining bulbs which hung from the ceiling.

Unfortunately I perceived at the end of the corridor a whole group that had come to enjoy the spectacle. There was the old masseur of the hotel, five honorable-maid-servants, one of them from the hotel next door, and the little scullion from the kitchen. In the group I recognized Mizu-San, and I divined that, jealous of Hana-San's having announced an important piece of news, she would report my awkwardness to milady the hotel-keeper, who did not like me. Milady the matron of my geishaya would be notified of it and, as she does not equivocate on such matters, she would give me a sharp scolding. It was with such sad re-

flections that I ended the dance. The mandolins were out of tune and the drums were uttering sepulchral groans. Happily the tune was very gay.

Then I learned the news. The married lady and the girl had requested that mattress and mosquito net be made ready for them; they both of them planned, apparently, to go to bed. My bet was virtually lost, and already Miss Little-Plum apologized for having taken a stand against me. I was exasperated in the extreme. Nevertheless as I have a moral sense, I addressed a prayer to Fudo-Sama,\* that the foreign gentleman content himself with the girl and leave the married woman alone.

They took away the dishes. Hopelessly the gentlemen awaited perhaps some invasion of giant mosquitoes, some miraculous thing which could defeat the sorry projects of the foreigner. It occurred to me that we would not be kept long tonight. And no little games, not even one of those beauty contests that they sometimes arrange, with us kneeling in a line, and from which generally I come out victorious. To amuse themselves my friends were doing little feats of dexterity with their fans. For

\* A terrible Buddhist divinity.

instance, you make the open fan whirl around, balanced on the tip of your little finger. Let the gentlemen try that! . . .

I was kneeling in front of Mr. Yamaguchi and the foreigner was just telling him that he found the dance very graceful and marvelously executed.

Then came the surprise.

The lady who kept the hotel appeared in the doorway and beckoned to me with an almost imperceptible glance which signified that she had something to tell me. Discreetly I got up and followed her. I was very angry at Mizu-San because I apprehended that this had to do with my awkwardness in the dance.

In the next room we knelt down face to face, in the midst of piles of the gentlemen's clothing like so many little mausoleums. She greeted me, saying, "*Suzushiu gozaimasu*,"\* which is very genteel. We bowed both of us slowly three times, touching our noses to the matting, and exchanged compliments all over again. Finally Milady the hotel-keeper, holding a half-bow, informed me that his Lordship the foreigner, unfortunately in-

\* "There is an honorable-coolness this evening" (a most polite phrase).



disposed, was compelled to spend the night in the humble-hotel Umematsuya. The gentleman from Azabu, desiring to honor his most august guest, had inquired whether I was tired and whether there was any obstacle to prevent me prolonging my honorable engagement for an hour, to sing to his Lordship—if he evinced an interest in them—some of the classic songs accompanied on the Japanese mandolin.

These words of the lady transported me with shame and with rage. Could she have found a more vulgar way to propose that I share pillows tonight with the gentleman whom I had met only during the day, an Occidental in addition. If music were the only thing in question, how soon would they have asked me about it! But it happens that women from time to time become ill . . . If my beauty-cream had not been thick on my face the lady would have seen my cheeks blanch.

I prostrated myself and while I kept my chin to the floor I lisped a long and gracious sentence, which in itself meant nothing in particular, but under the circumstances signified that I did not eat that sort of rice, and that she could discuss the matter with honorable-girls elsewhere.

Then the lady of the hotel tried in vain to play upon my sympathies. She commenced her story all over again in a manner more polite and less brusque, with a sob each time she pronounced the name of the gentleman from Azabu. I could not but see, thus, that the gentleman from Azabu was mortified at having presented to his friends an honorable-foreigner ignorant of good manners, and that he wanted moreover to prevent the honorable-foreigner from so disgracing himself without knowing it.

In brief she asked me to put myself out for a certain few gentlemen towards whom I had no obligations. I know the character of this lady; she is very sentimental, but it is always to her own advantage. They call it "tears of the devil."

Under the circumstance, here is what you were sobbing about, honorable-lady-of-the-hotel:

To be sure, if a foreign Lord of distinction, on rising from a ceremonious banquet, sleeps one night at your tavern with middle-class girls whom he has brought especially from a suburb of Tokio, tomorrow the whole island will wag tongues about it. Your lady-competitors who are always on the watch will cry the story abroad. Your hotel will

be smirched with the ineradicable smut of ridicule. The gentlemen who were your clients will no longer dare come lest they themselves get involved in this grotesque affair. Indeed, people no longer will dare to buy the merchandise the gentleman from Azabu sells, but you are little worried about him. This is quite different. Tomorrow henceforth your hotel will lose its prestige.

But if the foreigner sleeps with a geisha-girl, ah, that is another matter. Your honorable-pandering will be profitable. Indeed, the episode will be a piquant and elegant little scandal that will reflect honorably upon the hotel. It would be chic because everyone knows that it costs money, and that money alone is not enough: it requires a manner. The gentleman from Azabu will acquire glory in the public eye since he will have shown the munificence of a daimio.\* The foreigner will be quite pleasantly twitted and the gentlemen who are your clients will come all the more often to your hotel hoping sometime to hear from your lips a detailed story of the affair. And everybody will benefit by it except myself, who will be curiously degraded and pointed out on the street.

\* A powerful baron in the ancient Japanese feudal system.

So the lady's arguments were not at all persuasive . . . until in concluding she murmured between two sobs that the gentleman from Azabu was not at all uneasy touching the matter of a gift. Which was to say that I could ask whatever I wanted.

At that moment it seemed as if a thunderclap struck me. On the kakemono that hung on the wall before me I saw the apparition of an enormous camera, polished and new, quivering as on a movie screen and surrounded with piled clouds and a splendor of lights.

Without a moment's deliberation and hardly waiting for the proper interval to pass, I bowed deeply. And I held my face against my hands on the matting, and I whispered only these words: "Seventy-eight yen fifty."

It was a high price, it was a very high price indeed. But it was the price of Kodak No. 3 A, anastigmatic lens, shutter for both time and instantaneous exposures, and finder adjustable to several distances. I had seen one in a shop window; it was quite large and wonderfully nickeled.

After a genteel pause the lady bowed, by way of letting me know that she understood, and she re-

quested me politely to wait here where they would serve me an honorable-dinner. With a word she made me understand indeed that the honorable-gift would be eighty yen. So much the better, that would cover the cost of the money-order.

She went away, leaving me by myself to meditate. I told myself at first that I had been simple. The lady of the hotel was under no restrictions. I could have asked twenty yen more and then I could buy the No. 4 camera, which is heavier but which takes pictures postal card size. It's great fun. One can send to all one's friends and even to oneself one's own portrait on a postal card. One scrawls carelessly across the back that the picture was taken with one's new camera. What an impression that makes on everybody and particularly on the post-office employees!

Then I thought of the foreigner. With any other of these gentlemen I would have been much less troubled. But it is something to think about, to throw yourself impromptu into the arms of a gentleman come from the other end of the world; and already in public he had shown such monstrous manners. What sort of a man would he be alone with me? I was filled with apprehension.

I had some information about foreign men from two sources. The first was from a friend of a friend of Miss Little-Plum, who inadvertently had come to know a Scotch sailor at Yokahoma. These people eat nothing but raw beef, which gives them an enormous quantity of blood; hence in love they have a fury terrible indeed, but pleasant. We had all been very impressed by this story.

The other story of a contradictory nature came from Miss Little-Turtle. Last month she was serving at a banquet a very rich gentleman from Tokio who goes every year on business to Europe. This gentleman instructed her in many customs of those countries. It seems that there men have a mad revulsion on the approach of naked women. That is why they have so few children. This weakness worries them a great deal and they have adopted curious methods to correct it. For instance, they build naked women out of marble, twice as large as real women. And they set them up in all their public gardens, in the most visible places. That is to familiarize the eyes of their little boys who go playing up and down the streets, and to prepare them to marry later without terror.

Another thing. It seems that in Europe married



women change their dresses every two hours so that little by little as night approaches their gowns are cut lower at the neck. For instance, when at dinner their husbands respectfully pour tea for them in their bowls of rice, their gowns permit him to see the upper half of their breasts, or, if they prefer that side, all of their backs. That is in order to prepare their husbands gradually to look at them later on still more lightly dressed. But in the end the husbands get frightened and generally it would appear turn out the light.

All this is very extraordinary. With us it is different. Dressed or undressed we are always exposed to attack point-blank by some man. But of course anything is possible in a foreign country. This explains why they print so many postal cards uniformly labeled "Salon de Paris," of which the German boats are obliged to bring us every month the surplus. These cards represent very beautiful and very naked ladies who, standing before a large mirror, let you see at the same time both front and back. Over there these are to give to their little boys when they have been good at school. At Enoshima we all make collections of them. I have fifty-three different ones and twelve lovely



duplicates to exchange. But we do not cherish these cards for the same reason as they. It is so amusing to see how foreign ladies are formed. They have hair as yellow as rice-straw; and their skin is of a wonderful rosy color, just like lobster meat. . . .

The lady of the hotel graciously brought me honorable-tea and a lacquered box filled with soba, and I ate hungrily.

Once more I fell to dreaming about my camera. I saw myself kneeling in the midst of all my friends carefully unpacking it and unwrapping the silk paper, opening it with some difficulty and then explaining to everyone how the diaphragm opens and closes as if it were rubber. Next I would let them peek into the finder to see how little everything looked, and demanding silence I would place the camera in a porcelain bowl to make the shutter click louder. Finally, after having held it up to make the lens, big as a watch, gleam in the sun, I would kneel down again before my admiring friends and solicitously polish it with my best rice-powder.

With these pleasant thoughts I turned back into the banquet hall. There I found so tremendous a

change that I thought at first I was in the wrong room. Save for the foreigner who affected naïvely to know nothing of what had happened, all the gentlemen were exultant, overflowing with gaiety. Their nightmare had unexpectedly ended and in the happiest fashion. Just as I came in Professor Kamei was complimenting the gentleman from Azabu obviously on his resourcefulness. The latter, calling for more sake, went to kneel humbly as a modest host and play forfeits with Miss Little-Soybean in a corner of the room. Professor Kamei insisted that we do *Kappore* once more and said he wanted to dance it with us. The conversation too had shifted to a new subject. They were talking women! For Mr. Yamaguchi, squatting in front of Miss Little-Plum, was describing to her in detail what heroic things his wife was capable of; and Miss Little-Plum out of politeness was obliged to utter endless cries of admiration.

As for my friends, the other geisha-girls, I saw clearly that they were swept by conflicting emotions. To be sure I had done wrong and no one could approve of my conduct. But, after being faithful for one whole year, what a price I must have demanded! The imagined value of the gift

struck them with awe. They judged my decision with reservation but without extravagant severity. Where indeed is the girl who has never trespassed against the conventions! Politely no one made the least gesture as I came in. Only Miss Little-Turtle who takes me as a model and who is easily astonished looked at me with eyes as round as kai.\*

The gentleman from Azabu announced it was time to go, to catch the 8:29 train, which they must not miss; and the banqueters went into the next room to put on their clothes. We followed them politely to help them dress. The foreigner remained silent and motionless in his night-kimono.

As for young Mr. Takamori, no one need worry about his catching the train. Twenty minutes ago, after giving a furtive signal to the gentleman from Azabu, he got up and took himself off without leaving a trace, abandoning us to the honorable-old-men, which I think was very discourteous to us. This morning when he first put foot on the train, this insignificant young man knew already in what particular spot on the island of Enoshima he would spend the night.

\* A kind of large shell.

Mr. Yamaguchi was the first one dressed and squatting in a corner was scribbling away with all his might in a note-book. He beckoned me to come over and told me chuckling to read day after tomorrow the newspaper *Yedo Todai*. I would find there a very comical and very complete story of all that had happened tonight. I began to wonder if I had acted wisely for my future. If she knew, milady the matron would punish me harshly. But I begged Mr. Yamaguchi and obtained his promise that he would not mention my name, only that of my geishaya. What could I do? It was for the sake of my honorable-lover.

We escorted the gentlemen to the door of the hotel. Sitting on the threshold they put on their boots again. Meanwhile, with milady the hotel-keeper and the young-lady servants, we redoubled our farewells. Affectionately we said "*Itte irras-shai*" \* and we begged the gentlemen to arrive without mishap at Tokio.

The foreigner, dressed in a night-kimono, stood in the midst of us. Just as they were leaving the other gentlemen gave him ten thousand courteous

\* "Go with honor" (a most polite phrase).

good wishes. They thanked him for having enabled them to pass so precious an evening and implored him to take care of his health.

The gentleman from Azabu told him over and over again that several hours of Japanese music would be the best remedy for the melancholic condition of his stomach. Especially the honorable-foreigner should ask me to sing *The Thousand Gulls*, that ancient melody which is so poetic!

I heard them going down the road merrily in the darkness. Professor Kamei was singing down in his throat the song of *Yasugibushi*, which is a little vulgar. He was not accustomed to drinking sake.

My companions had disappeared as quickly as possible to go to dinner, and the foreigner went off to his room, conducted by the lady of the hotel. It was number 16; I would be able to find it alone. Down interminable creaking corridors I made my way, carrying the mandolin that they had left for me, since ostensibly that was the only reason for my presence.

I was a little worried about what would happen. He might hurt me; all during the evening he had shown himself so clumsy. Tomorrow my companions would greet me icily, that is to say with

extravagant demonstrations of politeness. But they would not maintain that haughtiness long, too eager to find out the exciting details of the night. I would tell them as much about it as I cared to.

Rather I was afraid of the gentlemen I would meet at future dinners. I would have disgraced myself by this affair with the foreigner and I would be no longer considered a girl worthy of appearing at a correct function. But people would know from the newspaper all the circumstances and how I had compromised myself only because of my sense of propriety.

The sliding doors of number 16 were open and the honorable-chamber was empty. It was a vast room of ten mats. In the middle, under a hundred-candle-power electric light was a low table on which were a bottle of lemonade and a bowl of fruit. In the wardrobe of lacquered bamboo were hung the foreigner's clothes. And on the floor in one corner the telephone; there are always telephones in hotel rooms. In front of me the partition was opened on a balcony which led to the adjacent chambers. Hardly had I time to kneel down when the honorable-servant Hana-San came in from the balcony, quite out of breath. She



blurted out what was happening. The foreigner it seems had wanted to know what sort of accommodations had been found for his honorable-guests, and if their room was large enough. The thoughtful soul! The room was closed up and not a ray of light came through the paper panes; the occupants must be sleeping. The lady of the hotel suggested that he go in and strike a light so that he could judge for himself what sort of room it was, but he expressed himself satisfied. Hana-San had been following him stealthily and that is why she was so breathless now. The silly child! She could have been carrying a jar of water as if to fill the wash-basin.

At this point the foreigner came in followed by the hotel keeper. To cover up her confusion Hana-San poured the lemonade but she was so nervous that she spilled half of it on the table. Milady the hotel-keeper uttered a tragic cry upon seeing so frugal a supper. She apologized with many tears and dispatched Hana-San to bring another bowl of fruit and a fresh bottle of lemonade. Naturally no glass for me; that would not have been correct. All was for the foreigner.



After many genteel compliments the hotel-keeper and Hana-San withdrew, drawing the partition to behind them.

For the first time in my life I was alone with a white man. He sat down on the floor, stretching his legs out comically in front of him. He seemed so uncomfortable. Yet the bare floor is the natural support of man, and he should have been able to rest on it at ease otherwise than standing on his feet. The Occidental gentlemen have not yet learned how to sit down like everybody else. Without a chair in reach, he seemed as lost as an orang-outang fallen from his native coconut tree. But he was handsome and imposing as a great savage ape. What stature! What girth! I gazed at him a little troubled.

He did not budge, and I busied myself as is customary peeling an orange for him. I spent three years studying this accomplishment. One first strips back the skin cut in the shape of a starfish; then one opens out the flesh in the shape of a flower, and with the point of a toothpick one takes out the seeds and removes every shred of rind. One presents the quarters of the

orange gracefully disposed upon what was their skin. It is a work of art. But this gentleman gobbled it up without taking a moment to admire it.

Suddenly the foreigner jumped up and strode out on the balcony. He was going back to the women. My bet was lost but it was my duty now never to tell the truth, since I was there for the purpose of dissembling it. It was to be a night full of adventure, and with my story leisurely and relishingly related I would become the idol of my honorable-friends for many days.

I had little time for reflection, for the chamber was invaded by one of those terrible poison butterflies. It was my duty to kill him. It was an heroic task and I was very frightened, for usually there are at least two of us to fight so formidable a creature. In each hand I took a sheet of silk paper doubled, to capture him and at the same time protect myself from his dreadful venom. Fleeing my approach he began to zigzag around the lamp. At last he lighted on one of the pillars of the tokoroma where I crushed him with a savage blow. Then I swathed his remains in a little pall of silk paper and this I wedged cautiously under the tele-

phone. Unfortunately I was alone, there was no one to admire my skill and my courage.

I had barely caught my breath when the foreigner returned leading by her hand the girl from Ryogoku. She followed him with a submissive smile which indicated that she did not come of her own desire. I was sorry that I had misjudged her before; I could see now that probably she was only obeying the orders of her father.

I was curious to see her. I was not at all in love with the gentleman, and I had no desire to wear the symbolic forms that legend places on the heads of jealous women; but just the same it is humiliating to be rejected in favor of a girl who is not so pretty as you are, who is not so well dressed, and who above all is not of a distinguished rank in society, since she is not a geisha-girl. Folly of an ignoramus!

But I blinked with chagrin, for she carried, thrust into her sash, the black fan which is in fashion. And I, I had neglected to bring mine.

The gentleman sat down on the floor and she knelt before him. Low she bowed and she thanked him for having enabled her to enjoy a very happy day.

The foreign gentleman set forth bravely to conquer her. He described to her the beautiful presents that he had brought for her and that had fallen in the ocean. She signified her appreciation, thanking him and exclaiming with enthusiasm, and I said to myself, "Believe him if you want to, poor simple girl, for my part I am a sceptic; I know men and their promises. These are the same kind of gifts as Mr. Takamori's diamond. Whimsies of thin smoke!"

At last the honorable-foreigner made clear his desires. Silently at every phrase she bowed, letting him understand thus that she would submit respectfully but without pleasure.

But failing to comprehend he began now to offer her large sums of money, something one should never do except through an intermediary. The girl smiled modestly and declined the money. She had, she said, enough to get back to Tokio. Nevertheless she was very grateful. Then he promised her secrecy. I myself was to stay there that night with them as a witness who could clear them; he would purchase my silence with a present. So much the better, I thought; I will be able to buy in addition a tripod for my camera with three nickeled legs,

very useful when you are taking your own portrait. I was not worried about the cost of films for I would receive from the geishaya my commission on my engagement fee for the night. Up to one o'clock in the morning, that is to say, for I was supposed to be back by that time; the honorable-police do not allow music any later.

Discreetly I made as if to withdraw upon the balcony, when suddenly the honorable-foreigner indulged in an immoral act toward the girl. Seizing her body in his arms, he put his mouth to hers to commit the kisu.\* Astounded I looked away. The mouth was not made for that; it was made to eat with and particularly to talk. But thanks to their inventive genius, the Occidental men some years ago conceived this extraordinary vice.

Never before had I seen the kisu, except at the movie in American films. The authors take this means of letting the audience know that the play is over and that they should leave the theatre as quickly as possible. It is a bizarre and scandalous expedient. Respectable families take the hint and leave the theatre without looking back. Young

\* From the English "kiss"; there is no such word in Japanese.

girls like myself hang their heads and cover their eyes with their fans, and we are very happy to hear the affronted young men hiss and jeer. That does not prevent the scandal beginning again at each new show. . . .

When I opened my eyes I perceived with relief that the honorable-foreigner had had to abandon his effort. Everything the girl would have submitted to, except this unnatural act. She defied him with a fierce stare, her lips shut tight, unable to dissemble her rage: she was a self-respecting young girl.

At this moment the telephone rang. The foreigner answered it. It was not for him but for the girl from Ryogoku. I could not help smiling. At the office of the hotel they knew already that the girl was in room 16, and the call must have been very important for them to let this be known.

I was very curious to know what the conversation was about. But I could learn nothing; the girl said merely, "*Moshi, moshi! . . . Ha! Ha! . . . Sayo de gozaimasu!*" \*

\* "Hello, hello! . . . Yes! Yes! . . . All right!" (In most polite terms.)

She hung up the receiver, rose to her feet with an inscrutable expression, and turned toward the door into the hallway; kneeling down, as was proper, she drew it open, and then going out she drew it shut behind her in the same manner. I heard her footfall dim away in the corridor.

The foreigner did not stir. He was waiting for the girl to come back. As for myself, considering the resolute manner with which she departed, I felt sure that he would never see her again. She had been disgusted by his immoral brutality; brought to herself by the ringing of the telephone, she was already on her way back to Tokio. And because of her leaving I had lost my tripod, but I bore her no ill-will; I would have done the same.

To pass the time, I took my mandolin and struck a few notes softly from time to time. I played a little song that was quite popular.

The honorable-foreigner presently found a pretext to go out of the room, and for some minutes wandered up and down the corridors looking for the girl. While he was gone, I had an inspiration. The reason for the girl's departure was not the kisu, it was the telephone. She had spoken very politely



into the apparatus right up to the minute when she hung up the receiver without saying "Sayonara." \* She would not have committed such an impropriety if the conclusion of the conversation had not upset her completely, left her beside herself. What could have been said to her? I burned with desire to know, but I would have to wait and see the maid-servants; surely they would be able to tell me. Possibly the question of money had not been settled clearly enough in advance. Her father had called off the deal.

The honorable-foreigner came back in with his eyes wild, and he asked me to go discreetly to the office and make inquiries. Now there was a pleasant commission, don't you think? Fortunately I can be tactful and the laugh would not be on me but on himself.

Before I could move however Mizu-San and Hana-San came in one after the other, ostensibly to prepare a mattress for the foreigner; but they should have been in bed long ago. I saw that they had important news to convey and that neither of them was willing to let the other bring it.

\* A polite form for "Good-bye."

Busily they moved the low table into a corner, and then Hana-San opened the wardrobe and took out three thin mattresses which they piled on the floor in the middle of the room. We Japanese never use more than one, but everyone knows that foreigners have softer bodies than we.

Presently in a nonchalant voice Mizu-San announced the news. The girl from Ryogoku had passed the office; at the door she had taken her parasol and her geta, and without saying good-bye she had vanished. She was holding her hand upon her mouth. Probably a thumping tooth . . .

Then Mizu-San, the sneak, gave me to understand that she had spied on the episode of the kisu. Already that must have been the subject of the unworthy chatter of my friends the geisha-girls and of the servants in the neighboring hotels. I was annoyed because I was counting on the sensation that anecdote would create tomorrow. All this time Hana-San was staring at me so that she could tell later what impression the episode had made on me. I was a mask.

But the foreigner bridled at the easy pleasantry of Mizu-San. He asked if the girl had dined to-

night. "Alas, almost nothing. She was certainly already ill. What a pity for everybody. A customer so gracious and so good-looking."

Of course the mattresses were too short. Hana-San, laughing, with her hand open as if surveying, measured the length of the foreigner. At the end of the others she put a mattress folded in three. This extension would be sufficient. Irascibly the foreigner asked Mizu-San if he could catch up with the girl. This question filled her with delight. Alas, no! The young girl walked very quickly, and by this time she must be on the tram which meets the 9:17 train for Tokio. There was nothing to do.

The foreigner made a gesture of annoyance that amused us all. The servants spread out the sheet, then over that a padded quilt. At the head of the bed they put a large pillow, and only one since the honorable-foreigner was supposedly sleeping alone; the hotel Umematsuya is a respectable place. The honorable-lord declared that he did not want this pillow on the pretext that it was too hard, and he asked them to tie together two flat cushions. What a bizarre and troublesome person! The man's pillow is very soft; it is a bolster stuffed with pressed rice. What would he think if he slept as I

do, with a little wooden pillow under my neck, covered only with a pad of rice-paper? Since one's hair is oily, every night one tears a sheet off the pad. A regular diary!

Mizu-San tried naturally to rekindle interest in her news and as she is a sly creature she found an expedient. She turned suddenly toward the telephone and said she would call the honorable-station-master at Fujisawa. The foreigner could talk to him about the girl who would soon arrive at the station. Possibly she need not undergo the hardship of traveling all the way to Tokio. There was a good dentist at Kamakura; the honorable-foreigner could take her to see him.

To our surprise the foreigner seized Mizu-San by the arm and told her that he did not want to disturb the honorable-station-master. We simply could not understand him. One disturbs people often for much less than that.

So this exciting episode was closed; we regretted it, all three of us, but there was nothing we could do. The two honorable-servants had had plenty of time to study the alternating expressions on our faces. Now they could delay a little longer in putting up the big green mosquito net which hangs

from the four corners of the room, and which makes the electric light quite dim.

Hana-San undertook to catch the rings of the mosquito net on the hooks on the wall, and as she is very small the foreigner took her in his arms and lifted her up. She giggled and cried that he tickled her. There is one girl he could have had easily if he desired!

Meanwhile I asked Mizu-San what was the mystery of the telephone conversation. To my amazement she did not know. What! She was not aware of the simple process which enables the honorable-servant at the switchboard to listen to the conversations of the guests! Everyone knows that. Really I would have thought Mizu-San more resourceful. And so I would never know that provoking secret of the telephone conversation. What a shame! To learn that I would almost give the diaphragm of my camera.

The mosquito net was fixed and the girls withdrew bowing. Only, just before she went out, Hana-San took out of the wardrobe and hid tactfully behind the telephone a tiny little woman's pillow. It was for me; one could hardly see it. The hotel Umematsuya is a very respectable place.

More and more dismal grew the foreigner. Filtering through the mosquito net the dim light gave his countenance a dark green tint; he was a funereal sight. And there he sat and not a move did he make, except to scratch his legs on account of the mosquitoes. From time to time I would catch one with one hand, an accomplishment of mine; but the living came to avenge the dead.

Thinking to divert the honorable-foreigner with the music of his own country, I suggested that I go and get the hotel phonograph, for which there are two European records, full of fire: *Pot-Pourri* and *Tipperary*. He said no. To be sure, the music is not very clear. The Japanese is the only music that is not spoiled by the phonograph; the squeaking of the records is really quite an addition.

I might have sung him *The Thousand Gulls*, but that song is anything but gay. He seemed to be getting sleepy. Contrary to all expectations, the night would pass without misadventure.

At this juncture unheralded the lady of the hotel burst into the room on the pretext of proposing an electric fan. However I at once divined that she had been attracted by the hope of surprising in an intimate moment a foreign gentleman of such ex-



traordinary dimensions; it would be magnificent.

She was disappointed, but she did not let that be seen. She knelt down in front of the honorable foreigner, chatting politely of this and that. But suddenly I saw the shining eyes of the foreigner turn to me. He instructed milady the hotel keeper to go away as quickly as she could, and she bowed low, making him the usual compliment in such a contingency.

The lady doubtless had expected a miracle for as she was leaving I heard her mutter some disappointed observations. In this life of ours, one's imagination takes one often far beyond reality.

She could not have gone very far from the room, I did not hear her footsteps creaking down the corridor; but her intervention had enabled me to escape the European preliminaries which would have been irritating to me.

Alone in my company he spent the night. So by my self-sacrifice the honor of all the other gentlemen and the honor of the hotel were saved.

Ah well! I was disappointed, extremely disappointed.

In the first place, I can bear witness that the honorable-Occidentals are all mad.—At one mo-



ment he had a nightmare, and he raved in bad Japanese; he cried, "Station-master of Fujisawa, you are right, sir; I am the *Seyo-na kanabum-bum*." \* What could he mean? I could not make head or tale of it.

The honorable-Occidentals are without education and without culture; they are in the condition in which we were about the beginning of the reign of his Majesty Jimmu-Tenno.† We will never meet them on an equal footing, that is impossible. But they have dire need of letting themselves be civilized by our brave emigrants.

These cavilings are nothing, let us come to the root of the matter. The prowess of the meat-eaters is nothing, alas, but a legend; and I have every reason to prefer my own lover.

In his vanity the honorable-lord told me about his love affairs. All with girls of a rather ordinary sort. It would do him good to cultivate geisha-girls, they would give him a little refinement. The miserable women he had known no doubt found themselves punished for their curiosity or their

\* Word for word: the gilded droning creature of the region of the western seas. In English: the European cockchafer.

† The first Emperor of Japan, son of a celestial dæmon, whose reign is dated about 1500 B. C.

naïveté. But alas! the experience of one means nothing to the others.

These are unpleasant memories. Let us think of them no more! Sunday I will see my young friend and together we will try out my new camera.

One thing however obsesses me, I can't get over my uneasiness. Just imagine: toward midnight this foreign-gentleman, on the pretext of more air, took up the mattress and laid it cross-wise in the room, exactly in a westerly direction. In vain did I protest; he would not listen. Now it is written in our holy books that the mattress must be arranged parallel to the axis of the chamber, head toward the north. If one does otherwise one offends the heavenly spirits, and in revenge they cast the evil-eye upon one.

Surely next Sunday all my pictures will be spoiled. And through his fault!





## VIII. O-TSUKI-SAMA . . .

*Here mouldering a chapel  
With broken tiles and door  
drooping ajar.  
But the mist hovers, smoke of  
perpetual incense;  
And all night long the swing-  
ing lamp of the moon.\**

IT was last night that this extraordinary adventure, perhaps the most beautiful in all my life, happened to me.

I am a student at Tokio and we are taking our

\* O-Tsuki-Sama is the title of the goddess of the moon in the Japanese theocracy: Most Venerable Lady Moon. The verses are freely rendered from the *Ohara go-ko*, a classic Japanese drama.

examinations. They are long and exhausting. Tokio too is dust and perspiration this time of the year. So with one of my friends, between two examinations, I came here to rest a few days in a tavern at Katase. It does not cost very much; you can get a meal for twenty sen. All day long we sit in our room, open on all sides to the sun and the crisp sea wind, and study; or now and then we take long walks. Life here is simple and free. And I was in need of this peace to recover my strength; for I am only nineteen and there are ten years of examinations still ahead. Every year they become more difficult and I look on into the future with some uneasiness. And when I shall have finished my studies, what shall I become? A professor, an officer in the civil service . . . ? I will win respect but very little money. To be sure, gold is beneath contempt, and the proverb tells us: "A purse gets foul as it fills like a cuspidor." I shall work for honor.

Our honorable-forefathers wrought this noble civilization of ours. It is our duty now to strive always to improve their handiwork and also even to maintain it. For Nature here is not so kindly toward man as she is elsewhere. Two months every year typhoons lay waste our harvests and lay low

our homes. And every twenty years we are stricken by some flood or some earthquake. Without the tireless efforts of us, the living, all would soon be blotted out.

In order to learn our own language we must spend two years longer in school than the young men of Europe, because our script is very complicated. And then it is necessary for us to make our scientific studies in a foreign language, because the technical terms do not exist in ours. All that requires much time and arduous labor.

From time to time it is proposed that we adopt the Roman alphabet of the Occidentals. That would be unwise. We must cherish our script, which is that of our ancient poets and philosophers. It is that indeed which controls our manner of thought and which gives their individuality to our people. To preserve our individuality, to remain our own selves, that is worth all the sacrifice that each of us makes in devoting so many years of his life to his education. It is a sort of military service, even more honorable than the other and perhaps even more useful. I myself feel that better still than the other it conserves the integrity of our racial character. . . .

Last night there was a full moon and the sea was enchanted. My friend was asleep, and I went alone to the beach.

I do not know in what fashion the moon shines on other lands and with what feelings foreigners regard her. . . . Not in the same fashion. They cannot love her as we do because the moon is truly Japanese. She means so much to us and we have so many memories. She has so prominent a part in all our national history, as is well seen in our drama, our poetry and our art.

Moon of the time of the Great Hideyoshi, she has lighted the field for many a duel of heroes. I see the flash of lifted swords, the gleam of helmets and ringing shields, the warriors pale in her cool lustre. What mighty men were our ancestors! Witness she was of the wonderful deeds of the forty-seven ronin.\* And they would look at her and gazing find their cold relentless resolution to vindicate their shamed honor.

Not only to our warriors does the moon belong, but also to all artists, to all sensitive and melancholy spirits. How many little elegies, how many

\* Vassels of a feudal lord.



legends, how many gentle songs have been addressed to her and bring down to us the fragrance of buried centuries!

For dreaming and meditation the light of the sun is not propitious. It is too hot and harsh and the hours of day are pestilential with mean and irritative details. But moonlight rinses the spirit and steeps all thought.

There are ten thousand ways to look at the moon, and all of them have been celebrated. Winter moon that illumines a snowy country-side; moon that fashions in shadow on the ground the delicate pattern of a trellis of soybean. Moon above the lake, that we watch from the dusk of a lonely pavilion; and some of us dream, and one of us murmurs some passage from ancient drama; and to the rhythm of the verses your image dances among the water-lilies.

Sacramental moon that lingers in the doorway of a temple, between the bell and its hanging cord. One leans against the pillar and looks at you and one meditates. You hold the bell in your bosom and the unnumbered lanterns that hang from the arch. And from the farthest depth of the sanc-



tuary one hears the pulsing of the sacred drums where venerable bonzes psalmodize all night long the litanies of that Divinity of which we all, Thou O-Tsuki-Sama and we, are but the shell.

Moon blithe and bantering of a June night, when one drifts idly on the calm river. The crepuscule is gay with the songs and the laughter of geisha-girls. You hang among the lanterns that festoon the deck of the gondola. With shivers of light you decorate the wake of the boat and the rippling caresses of the wind across the water. And the night dreams itself away delicately in the oblivion of weariness and of all care. . . .

Some prefer this kind of night, some that. It depends on one's character. I myself like to watch the moon above the sea. It is a spectacle more stark and more austere, and there is nothing that can diminish its majestic grandeur. One feels oneself enveloped by all the immensity of the universe.

Last night I walked a little way up the beach from Katase and I sat down on a broken old boat as if it were a pedestal on which the better I could enjoy my solitude.

When I am so deeply stirred I always want to

be alone. We Japanese are not like the Occidentals, those shameless people!

They are reluctant to show themselves naked. Why? Out of shame, they explain. What childishness! All bodies are fashioned alike and everyone else knows without looking how yours is made. On the other hand they disclose to the first comer their affections, their emotions, their most profound sentiments, all that which far more than their bodies constitutes personality. Why are they not ashamed of this spiritual nakedness? Loudly they parade their happiness, deplore their grief. They get drunk on their emotions; and when the whirlwind of exhibition is over their emotions have evaporated. Even more sensitive than they are we Japanese. But our smiles and our gestures are only a conventional language of politeness, they never reveal our inmost hearts. Within ourselves we cherish our emotions. Withheld and maturing, the fruits of the soul become more delicate and more rich. They endure long enough to nourish noble deeds.

I sat lonely as a statue and filled my bosom with the grandeur of the night. All that I have just told

came to my mind in little gusts; fragments of history, the poets of antiquity, the reveries of adolescence. The moon enchanted me, poured me into the universal soul of our land.

But presently I was startled by a sound some distance up the sand, and I looked. Coming from Emoshima, someone was approaching along the beach with faltering steps. Suddenly the shadow fell down and lay motionless. A few minutes passed.

Half with uneasiness and half with curiosity, I climbed down from the derelict and went to see who it could be.

It was a young girl stretched out on the sand; her face was buried in the sleeves of her kimono. Her parasol lay beside her.

I knelt down. Gently and respectfully I asked if she was in need of anything and if I could help her. She made no sign to prove that she had heard me. After a few minutes I tried to uncover her face and she resisted. Then I resigned myself to wait her pleasure.

At last she drew herself up on her knees, greeted me with a low bow, and in a cool musical voice assured me that she was not ill. She had come to

the beach only to meditate. She had no need of my good offices and begged me to leave her alone. . . . It was evident that she was suffering. I could not abandon her in her anguish. So I stayed, and by dint of soothing words and entreaties I drew from her bit by bit her story.

She had come to Enoshima on an outing and there at a hotel she had learned tidings of grave import. Her young cousin had telephoned her from Tokio to tell her that during her absence a letter addressed to her arrived. The letter contained a note for fifty yen and came from her grandmother at Koze. This money was to enable her to pay her debts and make a few indispensable purchases. And the letter instructed her to take the next train to Koze and make ready to be married in a fortnight. To be married.

Full well the young girl knew that some day she would be married, since through the mediation of her grandmother she had been betrothed at thirteen to the son of an honorable-merchant at Koze. The news had disturbed her because she had not thought the event so near, and she had desired to be by herself. So leaving her friends she started off toward the station. On the way she came down

on the beach to rest and think things over. That was all.

I congratulated her on putting by so soon her humble condition of girlhood to become an honorable-married-woman.

She thanked me graciously, but still I perceived that she was unhappy. I wanted to find out why, because I desired to console her if I could. She seemed so naïve, with such fresh and vivid emotions.

So continuing to question her I ascertained that her fiancé was a strong and honest lad. He was a student, and in the last intercollegiate race he had been third to reach the peak of Mount Fuji; she was proud of him. Moreover she knew that he was interested in women and that he was attracted by her. So he would not neglect his wife, and she would be devoted to him body and soul.

On the other hand, after long hesitation, she finally confessed that she was somewhat afraid of her future father- and mother-in-law. Her father-in-law was "a man who drinks honorable-sake," and her mother-in-law had the reputation of being rather dour and miserly.

I assured her that she had nothing to fear. In

return for her love and her devotion, her husband would be at her side to help her and to defend her if it were ever necessary.

She replied that unfortunately her husband would be absent almost always, since he was going to school in another city, and that naturally she would have to live in the home of his parents. She would rather have waited until he had finished his studies; and that is why she was a little sad.

But there you are. Her fiancé's parents were about to marry off one of their daughters who was just her age, and they needed her to replace the bride; that is to say to sew clothes and to clerk in the shop. Her marriage had been precipitated for that reason. It is the customary thing and there is nothing to do about it but nevertheless she felt a bit rebellious. . . .

She would forswear her happy way of life, free and capricious. No more on the morrow the thrill of the unexpected. Never another memory that would endure a week. No more the gay uniqueness of day after day. . . .

She was going to deliver up her fresh sensitive self to the harsh tutelage of two old people, who would treat her like a servant and, absolute in their

mastership, would freeze her heart and spirit in the rigid tradition of their own family. It would be in a way death for her. And nevertheless it was obligatory. Thus is perpetuated the religious identity of the family, respect for old age, adoration of our Ancestors.

All these things are necessary. They constitute the fibre of our social life. They are the source of our greatness and of our power. The Empire is formed of a cluster of robust and energetic families, whose sturdy roots are thrust deep into the legends of the past. In the center and dominating them all, the Imperial Family.

These rules are good: they give us national solidarity and thus we prosper. But they are harsh for women; their sex was blighted the day they were created, and one should thank Nature for having been born a man.

However, if fortune seems to have been more kindly to me, I bear upon my shoulders the burden of this crushing life of study and examination. And I myself, shall I be free to choose my wife? No. Whatever be the sex, each one of us must submit to a duty inflexible and ineluctable, imposed by



the example and the will of our Ancestors. We must be worthy of them.

Nevertheless I did want to console her, poor little child! I remonstrated that her father-in-law surely must be a jovial fellow. She would soon learn how to manage him. And if her mother-in-law were thrifty, she herself for that very reason some day would find herself rich. And her husband would not always have to be away. Every time he came home they would have a new honeymoon. And in the end, one day not so very remote, he would come back to stay with her.

Pensively, but hardly ever smiling, she listened to me. So I went on to call to her mind the pleasant pageantry of the wedding ceremony, the white headdress, the coiffure with hairpins representing storks and pine trees, the solemn ritual of the triple cup of sake.

We speculated on how much her family would spend on the clothes that would constitute her dowry; and then finally she began to be interested. We discussed her trousseau. She told me how many kimonos and obi she already possessed and how she would make them over. In a burst of confidence

she declared that, instead of paying her debts which were not pressing, she would spend the fifty yen that her grandmother gave her to buy an obi of mauve Hakata silk, which she needed badly for this summer. Little by little I had won her deepest trust, for certainly in this she revealed the dearest desire of her heart.

Behind a cloud the venerable moon was hidden for a moment, and then leaped out again. Seized at heart by the beauty of the night, we sat a while without a word. The spectacle was superb. The moon was riding high in heaven and her light lay broad across the twining sea. By day the beach of Katase is untidy, strewn with scraps of paper and straw. Now all this rubbish was invisible and the sand seemed clean as frosted ice. The crumbling derelict had assumed a nocturnal majesty. Behind us the village had put on an imperial night-kimono: all black, dotted with points of gold. In front of us the island of Enoshima was outlined by the triangle of her lanterns, in the shape of a temple candelabrum. Like a cherry tree stirring in the wind was the sea beneath the moon, but yet more brilliant: a cherry tree that cast its blossoms and put forth new ones immediately, ever more

young. The sky was the color of an antique silver lacquer. And the moon, candescent, round as a spread fire-screen, white with flame; her fire had put out all the stars. Motionless she illumined the skein of silken clouds as they drew past. In her clarity we were drenched and we became like phantoms of ourselves.

And I recited one of those Chinese poems, older than a thousand years, of which the inspiration is so pure that the poet seems to have known me better than I know myself; "O Moon, burning heart of the night . . ." Could I myself have found that apostrophe? No, it is too sincere.

But the young girl did not understand the Chinese language; it would be better to evoke for her more simple verses. Together we chanted the song that children learn their second year in school, so profound in its simplicity:

Round, round, round  
The moon looks down at me.  
Round, round, round  
Like a bowl of tea.

Round, round, round  
Behind a cloud she goes.

Black, black, black  
Like charcoal in a stove.

Round, round, round  
The moon again is free.  
Round, round, round  
Like a bowl of tea.

Her voice was so cool that I stopped singing and listening I saw myself once again a little boy in the classroom. . . .

Then we looked at the rabbit which is pictured in the moon and we pointed out to each other his ears. That is why the rabbit is represented in designs always in the light of the moon. They say that he is dreaming of her.

And now the eyes of the young girl were glinting and now from time to time she would smile. How alluring she was under the glacial light that divested everything of its rude reality! The pattern of her face and body were perfect. Her shadow on the sand was of the color of the soy-bean blossom. . . . She too had need of purging herself of the heavy thoughts that obsessed her.

We were kneeling near each other, side by side.

But every time that I drew nearer she shrank from me and was uneasy. Yet did not the englamoured night command us to mingle ourselves with the grandeur of all nature and to make flower in ourselves all the joy that was sown there?

Ever more loftily soared the moon. The surf only whispered, and when I turned to listen I could hear off in the village the infinite monotonous plaint of the cicadas. . . . Or was it not rather her spirit that mourned?

Thus as we mused a little time went by. Perhaps, I thought, she holds herself already bound by the vows of marriage and prohibited so from surrendering herself. But I felt a desire for her that made me suffer as if with the pang of starvation.

A fire-fly hovered near us and shed about us a zig-zag of dancing fire, like a frolic of friendly and fantastic ghosts. The delicacy of the spectacle took me out of myself.

And I drew the young girl toward me, I put my arms about her and held her breast to mine. Already she yielded pliant and seeming to swoon, her head falling back and her eyes closed. But the moment I relaxed a little my embrace, she buried her face against my shoulder, avid, supple and

shuddering like the Willow which symbolizes lovers in the poems of ancients. . . .

Beneath the moon we lost ourselves in our mingling, in a transfiguration that annihilated life with its preoccupations and fatigue. Although she had known no doubt other young men before me, I felt that she was exalted this moment with revelation.

Not only the loveliness of her body did she confide to me but utterly the delicacy of her spirit, inflamed and dazzled, and that so dazzled me; her soul which now perhaps first revealed itself to her, and whose secret and whose virginity she offered me in this one throbbing moment of realization.

Drunk with ourselves and drunk with the night, in the extremity of our love, it occurred to us that we should drown ourselves together in the sea whose waves languidly seemed to call with a suave susurrence. Bound breast to breast in her obi, body and spirit alike serene, to be engulfed together in an apotheosis of the moonlight and go thus to rejoin our Elders in the eternal placidity of all Souls. . . .

This idyl we relinquished, having no right to deviate so from the set paths of our destinies. Treason that would have been toward our race and treason toward ourselves.

Down dropped the moon into the horizon, and now the lanterns of Enoshima winked out. In each other's arms we went to sleep.

When I awoke it was dawn and she had vanished. I was cold, I was exhausted, my throat was parched. Once again in its banal diurnal aspect the beach lay before me. The commonplace of every day again was upon me.

I took a plunge to quicken and refresh my spirits. Then I turned back toward the tavern, having determined to keep my secret forever the loveliness of that night. I scanned the beach as I walked on. Already the wind had quite effaced the print of her geta, the hollow where her body had lain. I was stricken with desolation at the thought that I would never see her again. We could have lived a life together happily. And she had been no more than my companion for one night. . . . Thus Fate.

I did see her again however. The rumor had already spread through the village that they had



found the body of a young girl at the foot of the rocks that lift from the sea, at the end of the beach of Katase, toward Kamakura. At this point suicides are often found.

Chilled with a presentiment I hurried to investigate. It was she indeed. The police had not arrived yet to carry off the body and there were only a few morbid hangers-on at the spot. On her side she lay, just as she had lain when we fell asleep together; her wet clothes clinging to her with rippled sea water revealed her body almost as completely as it had been revealed last night against mine.

How did she find this place? . . . It was clearly a suicide, for in her purse they found a scrawl of farewell. To her father and all her relatives and friends, she left word not to mourn her. Her soul would come to visit and to greet them even this year on All Souls' Night.

Rigid and impassive I held myself, concealing my torment. As more and more the curious came thronging, I went my way. I had need of being alone and without distraction.

And so I wandered somehow back to the place where we had lain last night. No trace was left there of all her loveliness. Yet as I looked, in the

pale light of the rising sun, something glittered in the sand. It was a tiny little fish of mother-of-pearl, attached to a link of green thread, which had hung from her obi. The sight of it kindled anew my pain. Poor little fish of pearl; modest thumb-nail trinket, that weighed less than nothing in the hollow of my hand: this was the symbol of her importance in nature. She had selected it that day to adorn herself and to bring her goodluck.

Had I the right to keep it? No, it was not mine. She had not given it to me. She would have taken it whither she was going, in order to make her appearance in the beyond without the least small detail wanting in her toilet. This would have been her regard for propriety and dignity.

I will respect her wish. I will go, when no one else is there, to the place where she perished and throw her trinket after her into the sea.

I do not believe very devoutly in the verity of the Feast of All Souls, or rather I believe it because it is a good belief. It is one of those ideas that reconcile people to the approach of death. They encourage that eager sacrifice of life which is the virtue of my race.

However next month on the appointed night, I will leave Tokio; I will make a fine show of joyousness and I will go alone to this beach of Katase.

I will sit for a time on the old derelict. There will be a full moon as last night. I will muse upon her and upon the significance of our meeting. I will force myself to be quite without melancholy. And I know that the spirit of her will come in a breath of wind, to wish me courage to continue in life.

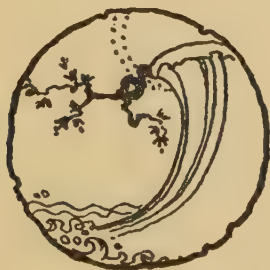
I will not talk to the police or to any person. What good would that do? It would not explain her secret. And for what reason did she kill herself? Were I vain, I might say that it was because she had become enamored of me and that she could not bear the prospect of being the wife of another. Or one might conclude that it was out of grief over her spent girlhood, out of terror at the approach of this austere marriage. Others who knew would conjure up other motives, and all would be equally mistaken. To me the truth is this: In daylight the world is not always good to see. The gracious landscape is cut across by stark telegraph wires, and the thought of man is smutted by vanity or cupidity. But on a moonlit night all things are

transfigured and refined; one sees an enchanted order of life. And the sight of it may become so beautiful as not to be endured, and when one is very sensitive sometimes one dies of it.

I myself am too intellectual and emotion reaches me dilute and denatured through the brain. Yet with what passion I had already responded to the sublimity of the night! But she, all intuition, as she neared the burning truth, had suffered a shock of ecstasy at the source of the heart too violent to be borne.

Some hours before the death of her body her soul had already died, drowned in Thy clarity. . . .

O-Tsuki-Sama . . . Thou art the cause!







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